THE DAYSMAN

BERTRAND EMILE
BOOK STORE

THE DAYSMAN

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TO

MY MOTHER

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

AS A TOKEN OF MY

APPRECIATION OF HER NOBLE QUALITIES OF HEART

AND MY ESTEEM FOR HER MENTAL GIFTS.

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THE DAYSMAN

PART I.

"The sun set but set not his hope:
Stars rose; his faith was earlier up;
Fixed on the enormous galaxy,
Deeper and older seemed his eye:
And matched his sufferance sublime,
The taciturnity of time.
He spoke, and words more soft than rain
Brought the Age of Gold again;
His action won such reverence sweet,
As hid all measure of the feat."

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

THE DAYSMAN

CHAPTER I.

"A wind that might have swept the fields of mortality for a thousand centuries."—*De Quincey.*

T was a wild night.

In a country whose currents of air are prone to drowse through summer noons and to awake in the gentle insouciance of an evening breeze—the wind which had begun to blow.

For days a storm had been mustering its forces. White clouds formed somewhere below the visible horizon and driven across the unbroken blue of a clear sky had rolled up in vast dark phalanxes toward the West, where an evening sun, burning itself out in fiery splendors of copper and gold, had left the ashen heavens glowering and overcast.

And then suddenly—out of a deep silence—had come the unaccustomed sound of rising wind. It blew across the valley in great gusty sighs; it howled up the canyon and moaned about the shack wherein his father lay dying. Portentious, vaguely suggestive of impending

evil, it seemed a weird half-human cry—wild with the threat of coming rain which would follow in its wake.

Death was inevitable the doctor had said—"death before morning"—and above the low sobbing of the wind a noise of distant hammering was borne across the darkness—distinct, almost uncanny—a haunting insistance of sound that accompanied in grim staccato the short sharp breathing of the sick man.

From the shop a few yards away where carpenters were at work upon a rude temporary coffin, a subdued murmer of voices could be heard in those brief moments of silence that intervened between the hideous monotony of driving nails, the dull thud of a dropped hammer or the sharp grating of a saw.

Late as it was the whole camp was astir. In the store, where each evening found a crowd of eager shoppers bent upon supplying necessities or yielding to the alluring temptations of luxury, the rush hour was long since over. Bacon and frijoles no longer commanded the attention—pate de foie gras and cut glass tumblers had ceased to entice the imagination and still groups of men lingered near the door discussing the probable chances of rain before daybreak, while knots of women gathered about the counters engaging in low-toned conversations or affecting deep deliberation over petty purchases in order to delay the moment of going. Clearly the public mind was absorbed in something more vital than surface trivialities.

Queen Elizabeth was one of those embryo towns characteristic of the late eighties in the Territory—for the mine had yet to impress its rich existence upon the

Eastern world. Climbing a rugged slope in desultory fashion the settlement seemed to have wrested but a precarious footing from the mountain to whose side it clung, an impression of insecurity not out of harmony with that air of tentative prosperity which marked the first stages of its early development. Substantial wagon roads hewn and blasted out of the mighty hill wound tortuously from its lofty shaft-house, past the store and offices of the company, down, ever down, to the bed of a canyon and out into the valley beyond. These roads constituted the main thoroughfares and from them countless narrow paths and trails diverged in many directions, seaming steep precipices and frowning cliffs and leading to those safe lodges where tiny cabins were perched like aeries on the solid rock.

The property had slipped through the fingers of many men, some of whom had let it go lightly, others with a vague reluctance, an undefined regret; still others with that sharp relief that follows an uneasy fear of loss, and all the while Nature, strangely elusive in her consciousness of latent power, had held her rich treasure in reserve, demanding surer hope and larger faith than she had yet found in this land beyond the Great Divide.

For the Territory after passing from the feverish dream of a golden age into the wilder delirium of a great silver epoch had come to that period of transition which was to separate the self-reliant poise of its sane virility from the lusty over-confidence of its spectacular youth. The curtain had been wrung down upon a brilliant drama of splendid adolescence wherein the play

of primitive passions had struck many a tragic note. To those dazzling visions of easily won fortune some looked back with a jaundiced eye, but few would have exchanged the lime-light glare for the more wholesome dawn of a better day.

It was in this brief pause, at the end of the old era, that a great mine was born. Tracing its origin to a company, owing its achievement to a man, destined later to startle the world with its wealth, the Queen Elizabeth came into existence unheralded even in its own country, scarcely stirring to passing interest a generation whose imagination overstimulated by the rich surface leads of a score of years, had not the power to conceive of a deeper treasure trove. And the man who had believed in her dormant possibilities while as yet mesquite and cactus grew undisturbed upon the mountain side, the man in whose brain her life had germinated with the inception of the great idea, the one man, possibly, of the moment, who comprehending her nascent capacity, had begun to dream of realizing her future happened to be dying on a stormy night in the summer of eighty-eight.

Up the street, beyond the store, in a rough cabin where such small comforts as the camp afforded had been hastily brought together, John Treverin waited.

Alone, save for the presence of that still form upon the bed, with every sense alert for the last tones of his father's voice, he watched, while the slow minutes dragged through a weary hour. He became aware of the doctor's entrance, of his return later, to the outer

room—he felt that his father stirred, that a groping hand met the clasp of his own warm fingers.

It was a young face and a strong one that shown out of the dim light. Drawn by the poignant anguish of early manhood in its first stern lines of sorrow, it bore a striking resemblance to the maturer power of the clearly cut features on the pillow.

That his father should die suddenly in the full vigor of an early prime was a contingency of which he had not dreamed, but life in the open develops its own philosophy and the sustained outward poise with which he was facing the inevitable held its own suggestion of native character. John Treverin, however, mentally balanced, physically healthy and spiritually sane had arrived at the age of eighteen, with little idea of a submission beyond reason. Discipline he had known as a potent force subduing the lawless impulse of youth or regulating them to a larger control, unerring as the eternal order of the universe—satisfying one's sense of logic in its keen appeal to a broader understanding, but in the dumb agony of boyhood, where he came to realize the limitations of science, the futility of human skill, the inarticulate passion of his nature fought out its first battle with Fate.

Could the ebbing life drift away in this fog of unconsciousness? Must the mind die without the power of knowing its own thought? Would the fervid spirit be quenched like smouldering fire, or might it not, rather, be kindled into flame to go out in the pure flashing of its own light? In a moment of clear vision he might look through the medium of his father's clear

judgment beyond the present crisis into an untried future. To demand that moment was rational—therein lay his justification. Never had he wanted anything with such a terrible longing—a longing which would not be denied and so, hoping against hope, he reached the apotheosis of will: absorbed in expectation, he transcended grief and his mental attitude became an obsession to which every faculty lent itself, with which the savage fury of the elements and the grim noises of the night seemed in strange harmony.

Through the long hours he waited, dominating the situation as the wind ruled the night, by the masterful strength of blind force, and when, in the cold grey light of an early dawn, the rain came—driving against the windows, beating upon the door, pounding over the roof—in a mighty rush of crashing sound, his vigil ended.

CHAPTER II.

"Have ye drunk of the stream called Hassayamp,
Where men in the 'sixties us' ter camp?
There was gold galore
An' millions more
On that d—d ole Hassayamp.

"When ye've drunk of that stream, all yer tales might seem,
Purty big to the most of men.
But when all is told,
There *was* heaps of gold
Took out near the Hassayamp.

"An' the man that drinks, jest says what he thinks.
'Could he think a lie?' Stranger, pass that by—
Let him say the worst—
There was gold fer the thirst
Of the *world*, near the Hassayamp."

THE sun rode high in the Arizona heavens where light clouds, exhausted of their moisture for the repletion of the ground, floated like white phantoms through the blue ether, rested idly on the flanks of rugged mountains or crowned the crests of sear hills with vaporous wreathes.

Recuperating from a sweeping onslaught of midsummer tempest the drenched earth in smiling inertia awaited that miracle of recreation which comes to this country with the season of rain. In the beauty of the morning there was a promise of the new life that would

shortly emanate from the parched world of yesterday from its vegetation sun-burned and dust-laden even from its scorched and barren rocks now gleaming wet in the early light. The rich green of the grease wood shone dark against a warm brown soil where tawny grasses and yellowing leaf contrasted sharply with the silver sheen of waving sage and the sombre brilliance of low scrub oak. Through all the landscape was the fresh sweetness of the newly washed and on the wizened face of nature there was hope.

It was past the hour of the morning shift, but Queen Elizabeth, with no sound from the shaft house to startle her calm had opened the day in studied inaction and holiday attire. Rough men hung idly about open doorways or wandered aimlessly down the silent street, where children, wide-eyed and curious, had gathered from all sides, their imagination stimulated to unusual effort concerning the possible use of a certain harnessed team and heavy wagon, waiting in front of that closed door, near which two saddled horses cropped such stray tufts of bunch grass as were to be found within the limited freedom permitted to a dragging rein. For to draw the lines over his head is equivalent, in the West to putting your animal on parole, and no self-respecting broncho will ever take advantage of that sweet liberty of self-restraint so rarely granted in older civilizations where the systematic planting of hitching-posts or the stricter surveillance of a groom seems to have gone hand in hand with the development of other forms of law.

But the horses browsing calmly and the huge conis-

toga hard-by, though common enough sights in themselves possessed to-day so new and gloomy an interest that wild speculation as to their destination, long rife among certain small boys, had reached a point where theory seemed to need an emphasis difficult to maintain without the aid of fisticuffs and prestige untenable through argument was finding more tangible expression in prowess.

For their more circumspect elders, however, there was no such exciting diversion to shorten the long morning which, creeping on apace, dragged wearily to men unaccustomed to the luxury of formal mourning, and to youths grown restive under the burden of an off-day without its usual accompaniment of boisterous pleasure. To the Baron only, comfortably established in deserted offices, refurbishing old tales of early days for the benefit of a select audience, recently arrived from "the States" the uninterrupted hours promised a large relief from the tedious ennui of silence.

"No," he was saying, "my real name's Hill—'High Hill' they use ter call me when the Americans fust come into the Territory until one day the boss—yes, him that's lyin' dead, up yonder," with a nod of mysterious gravity in the direction of the cabin on the ledge, "sent for me to guide a party over the mountains to look at a property, in Skull Valley. 'This is His Highness of the Hassayampa, gentleman,' says he, 'and I think I've never known of any one, with the exception of the famous Munchausen'—he added kind of laughing, 'who has had sech interestin' and startlin' experiences!'

"Well, not knowin' my real name and havin' to call me somethin' they jest natchelly took to 'Baron,' and the name's sort of stuck ever since. Do I know anything about the other Baron, d'ye say? Yes, I learnt later that he was a German feller what had done a heap of travelin', though he'd somehow missed the Hassayamp."

"Yes," in response to a tentative question, "I have seen great doin's along that ole stream. I was guidin' there in the sixties when the Vulture mine was turnin' out millions in gold ingots and money so scurce that the miners was paid in bars of bullion, weighed out accordin' to what was comin' to each:—no, it wasn't the first time that metal bearin' the stamp of a mine had passed as currency in these parts. Why, sir, years ago, slabs of silver from the Patagonia mines, wuth from three hundred plunks down to two, was current coin this side of Sonora. My, but that was big payin' ore on the Hassayamp! Them Mexican miners use ter get away with small fortunes jest by concealin' a few hundreds in rich quartz down in their shoes or hid about 'em somewheres, until, at last there was a regular searchin' party before one of 'em was allowed to leave a mine.

One evenin' when I was campin' with a party of men out on the desert, along about where the city of Phœnix is now, two Mexican miners come along from the North. We'd jest finished eatin' supper, but the pore devils looked so hongry that we invited 'em to have a bit of the leavin's. They didn't need no urgin', you bet, but begun eatin' like a couple of starvin' coyotes,

an' then, later, jest as one of them there d—— greasers was rollin' up his coat for a piller, fixin' for a night under the stars, out of his pocket dropped a big tortilla. It plunked straight down into the sand too hard and forcible to escape notice, and when the durned thing busted open there in the middle shinin' through the dusk was a little piece of quartz carryin' about twenty ounces of free gold, I could swear."

He was an old man, this "Baron," who claimed the spurs of a veteran *raconteur*. His hair was white, and a well-kept beard flowed over a shirt whose immaculate cleanliness was the more fully revealed by the fact that he wore no coat. But whatever he may have seen, you were instantly aware that neither the mind of a sage nor that of a visionary looked out of the faded eyes, so dimly blue in their pale shallows. The "Baron" had no quaint philosophy, such as is sometimes evolved by the old who have grown deep through reflection. He was rather an observer whose snap-shot views of life photographed upon a sensitive retina and developed later through flimsy speech, had been finally transferred to the gallery of a memory which held no pictures engraved in the light and shade of thought, no etchings bitten out with the acid of emotion, no powerful prints in black and white—those first states of experience—to suggest invidious comparison by their technical perfection of detail. Now and again, when some lurid chromo crept into his collection, it found no rival masterpiece glowing with the rich colors of imagination and yet, there was a certain naïve charm in the "Baron's" impressionistic art. It mattered

little that his subjects often appeared disproportionly large, slightly blurred or strangely out of focus, for now and then, on this thin film of mental kodak was stamped some characteristic glimpse of an individuality greater than his own, some negative not deficient in perspective and suggesting the atmosphere of an epoch which has yet to be imprinted on the register of history.

"Yes," he drawled, "I've knowed this country since the forties, when I come in with a party bound for California (everybody was hustlin' in that direction them days, with never a thought that heaps of gold nuggets was lyin' right here in Ariozna jest waitin' to be picked up). As fer me, it was pure accident that I was left behind, an' happened in this way: Jest before reachin' Tucson, where we-all was figurin' on layin' in supplies, my horse, a little devil of a Mexican pinto, rolled over on my leg. A mighty small accident it seemed at first, but fever set in an' that's the way I missed keepin' company with my partners' bones bleachin' out there in Death Valley. And so I stayed in Tucson—a Spanish fort in them days—an' a queer ole pueblo it was, with its narrow streets an' low, thick-walled adobe houses, an' crowded tiendas, where black-eyed senoras bargained fer jerked beef and sheaves of wheat brought fresh from the pasture. Of course there was strappin' cabaleros swaggerin' 'round and purty darked-skinned senoritas in plenty. I don't know jest what kept me there, but they's somethin' about the sky and the air and the mountains that kind of takes hold of a man so he don't exactly feel like movin' on. Then, later, I

tried prospectin', and when the Injuns wasn't overlively, livin' come mighty easy. There was fine huntin', too, in the Catalina Mountains, windin' up an' up an' up through forests of pine and fir an' still higher to a point from where Tucson, lyin' near ten thousand feet below, seemed like a toy village away off there on the plains.

Of course, there was days when, lookin' far East through miles an' miles of sparklin air, you was apt to wish for home an' faces that wasn't Mexican. Many's the time, after one of them spells I'd gallop down the trail like mad and rush into town to read over and over them d——d advertisements of the stage line, "provided with new coaches offerin' a speedy trip from El Paso to the States,' an' assurin' the would-be passengers of such safety against guerrillas an' Injuns 'as military protection afforded.' There was one printed in Spanish an' English posted on a tree in the plaza which I us' ter study till I knowed every word by heart an' could almost see myself cuttin' fer home, but the sign didn't offer no suggestions fer gettin' past those murderin' Apaches, infestin' the country between El Paso and Tucson, an' by the time I got to figgerin' up the gamble in them three thousand unpertected miles, I wasn't quite so hot on the trail.

"Besides, minin's interestin', not to say excitin', when you've got to usin' the pick an' drill with a gun lyin' handy, an' your chances to bein' sent clean into kingdom come minus a scalp and a few other conveniences more than even. Then there was always them old stories of the *planchas de plata* eggin' a man on, and

suggestin' the possibility of layin' up a little treasure this side of heaven. Them Mexicans was a queer lot; they had a habit of goin' to confession just before makin' off fer a spell of work on their claims, an' it was no oncommon sight to see them settin' out straight from church fer Tucomcori or the Santa Rita Mountains. 'A good thing,' thinks I, 'havin' the saints to watch with you against them Injun devils,' so I got myself converted by a holy padre and found their religion almost as satisfyin' as their hot tomales. It stands to reason that there's somethin' in it, fer ain't the church been interested in Arizona mines since the days of the bishop's salero? I've always noticed that customs don't seem so queer when you know the causes that led up to their bein' adopted. There's the taste fer chilli con carne—some folks is down on such high seasonin', but, as the cow-puncher says, at a temperance meetin' (what he broke up, down to Yuma), when they tried to get him to sign a pledge: 'To be hotter inside than you are outside is yer only chanct of keepin' cool in a d——d country jest next door to h——ll.' No, siree; he wasn't talkin' of Arizona, but of them big stretches of California desert jest beyond the line. Oh, yes," with the nonchalent unconsciousness of territorial pride, "we have it hot here, too, sometimes, 'specially on the Southers plains, but it's always cool in the mountains an' there's mountains everywhere, which is more than can be said fer lots of them States in the Mississippi Valley without the red-hot reputation of Arizona.

"But I was speakin' of Tucson in the early days.

No, *sir*; I never went back of the Great Divide, myself, but before long 'the States' come over to me an' the stars and stripes floated out over the old fort where Spain had ruled nigh three hundred years. Then we had military protection ourselves, an' in fifty-six, when the Butterfield stage was extended through Tucson to San Diego, we saw the first of the Overland Mail. Soon white settlers began movin' in, a few stragglin' cattle, an' more prospectors, but it wasn't till sixty-three, when the territorial government an' ole Prescott took a start together, that things begun comin' our way. Folks hadn't paid much attention to the ole Ajo Mine sending its load of red oxide and native copper, by ox team, across the desert to Yuma, shippin' down the Colorado 'roun' to 'Frisco an' clean over to Swansea in Wales, nor yet to the Planet Mines which, between fifty and sixty, had their smeltin' likewise done abroad. But times changed with the discoverin' of the Vulture, and then men got busy on the Hassayamp.

"Oh, them was times! Sinkin' shafts—borin' tunnels? No, *sir,*" and the old man glanced scornfully out over the crude ugliness of the slag dumps and as much of the smug prosperity of Queen Elizabeth as it was possible to see from the office window—"who wanted to go down when men was diggin' out with pocket-knives eighteen hundred dollars' wuth of gold nuggets in a day. Grass-root bonanzas? Well, I guess *so,* with ore runnin' higher than ten thousand dollars to the ton, right on top of the ground. To scratch a rock fer lead and find over a million in silver sounds like fairy tales, but it was as sure a thing as the fact that ore millin'

less than one hundred a ton was flung on the dumps to waste.

"It may be true what the boss always said about there bein' bigger fortunes deeper down, but it takes heaps of money to get there, and you can't see it come quite so quick; but," reminiscently, "the boss certainly set great store by this here mine. I recollect the first day the water come through—piped clean over the mountains agin a head of a thousand feet; he was standin' at the tank, half way up that hill, ketchin' the first flow straight in his sombrero like a boy . Men had been trampin' these hills fer years, prospectin' 'roun' locatin' a claim here and there on the mountain side, but gold and silver seemed scarce in these canyons compared to other big finds of them days, an' green copper stains didn't interest a man much when he hadn't the money to develop his prospect and bring it to a producin' stage. Here an' there, some feller with a little more gumption than the rest, tried to get others interested, but had sech a hard time doin' it that he'd sell out or trade off fer somethin' more promisin'. At last an Arizona company bought up several claims, run a tunnel into the hill, took out quite a lot of ore, an' then begun to get scared. It was jest about that time that the boss come along and took over the whole blamed outfit. He begun developin' alone, spendin' every cent he had, some say, but never turnin' a hair. 'Layin' the foundations of a great mine,' I've heered him tell his friends, laughin', 'an' sinkin' what fortune you've got at the same time,' was the answer they give him. No matter, he kep' on backin' his faith with his money an',

at last, when it begun to get aroun' that the boss had struck a perty good thing, men outside the Territory begun to get attracted. Oh, yes, he let em in, I guess, at any rate, there was a smelter blown in, these roads was built, more men was employed, an' a bigger volume of ore was extracted, but the boss always held the controllin' interest, leastways, I've never knowed of no other actin' head. An' I'm sort of wonderin' what's agoin' to become of it now?"

Hereupon, the "Baron,' perceiving that his listeners began to look deeply bored, decided to introduce one of those highly colored chromo lithographs which were kept in his repertoire for moments when the interest began to flag and which were no doubt responsible for his reputation as a great spinner of yarns. These stories purporting to describe adventures encountered in the "Baron's" youth, must have originated in those bibulous moments when frequent strong potations exercised a stimulating influence upon a mind lacking innate originality and otherwise deficient in inventive genius. For the man, now grown old, possessed so fatal a tendency toward historical accuracy as to resort to fiction *only* when he suspected that his hearers had no taste for fact. With the intuition natural to a showman, however, he sooner or later "sensed" the fact of wandering attention, and with the autocratic self-consciousness of the "habitual entertainer," to whom applause is the only criterion of success, prepared to hold his audience at any cost.

But—there was a sudden stir in the curious crowd that waited further up the street, and the door, so long

watched, was at last thrown wide. The heavy tramp of rough-shod feet sounded across a bare board floor and the long, rude box, whose crude outlines shown through unskillful drapings of somber black, was borne forth slowly by eight strong men and placed in the waiting wagon. Two riders mounting rode before and, as all descended the winding street, hats came off and silence reigned while Queen Elizabeth honored her dead. For the man who had made her what she was, those heads were bared. Was there none to mourn his dream of what she was to be? Had it passed with the man? Ah, how much lies hidden behind the veil of the future!'

CHAPTER III.

"My *real facts* may fall under suspicion by being found in company with his confounded inventions. They had all been travelers and upon their return home had deceived their friends by describing places they never saw and relating things that never happened: this gave *me* no concern, however, *as I have ever confined myself to facts.—Munchausen.*

"That," said the Baron, "is Richard Wood, ridin' along with the boss' son. He got here last night jest before the storm—was sent fer, I s'pose, they was always friends. Fine man, Wood, makin' money, I guess, leastways they say he's buildin' some—got a railroad in his head—an' he's not the man to play a losin' game; though there's this difference between him an' most others: *He's* all the time, like the look-out in faro, watchin' to see that the hull crowd's playin' fair an' nobody cheatin' the Territory."

The man, thus described, rode at the head of the small procession that wound down the steep hillside road and out across the valley. Erect in the saddle, seeming almost to stand—so straight was the line from head to foot—he held the long stirrup with that certain pliant resoluteness which is the poetry of motion; and the art of "getting into a horse," sometimes natural, more often acquired, appeared to be his in such perfection that the rhythmic motion of the animal seemed in retroactive harmony with the well-knit figure of the man.

The same tractable firmness in his manner of handling the lines, made of the simple gesture something more than muscular contraction, something far from the accidental, something indeed which might have impressed the keen observer as quite characteristic. It conveyed a slight suggestion of the talent for mastery, it hinted at a latent gift for supremacy which, no doubt, would be corroborated in the face, just then concealed by the broad brim of a wide felt hat. There was an easy dignity in his carriage of a tall and rather sinewy form that lent to the careless picturesqueness of an ordinary Western riding costume a subtle air of distinction.

"He came to the Territory when he was a boy." It was the "Baron" again who spoke, and this time his laconic sentences met with a certain amount of response, for interest will ever quicken to that dominant note of individuality which, for lack of a better term, men have defined as personal magnetism, and there were few among his hearers who had not heard of Richard Wood —a name which even at that time had begun to carry weight in the Territory. "He'd started drivin' a stage in California; next, he was runnin' the hull outfit, an' at last sold out the line at a profit and with that small capital he started in here. You couldn't keep Wood under, ef ye tried. He's got the trick of rulin' men. I recollect when he was managin' the Lone Star Mine (folks said he was a heap too young to tackle a thing of that kind, but he had the grit, an' *that's* what counts in any proposition), there was a big strike on, an' ole Joe Sedges, the owner, come down to help out. When

he got there things was in perty bad shape. The men was hangin' Dick in effigy, while that blamed kid himself was standin' guard in the engine-room, with a loaded revolver in each hand, facin' a committee of leaders that had come to consult about makin' terms. He kep' em at bay with the look in his eye an' by sayin' quietly, 'there are ten to one, an' you could, no doubt, overpower me in short order, but the first two or three may go down and out, for I seldom miss my aim.'

"Then ole Joe sent Dick up to Prescott, sixty miles over a lonely road—with all the surplus ore loaded on a wagon of rusty nails—to engage strike-breakers an' bring em down as quick as possible. By the time he arrived, however, with a hull new force, the thing was over an' they nachelly expected the new party to go back accordin' to argreement, but they kep' lingerin' aroun', enjoyin' the livin' (fer we had a fine mess cook), an' finally ups and departs without payin' their board fer all them extry days, though they had been paid all that was due them an' more, too. When Dick heard about it he was so mad he jest jumped on his horse an' caught 'em up over the mountain where he called a halt an' demanded of each man to settle up square. They all done it, too, though never a one could explain jest why, fer Dick was alone, an' they wasn't over nice characters, er a bit squeamish on a point of killin'.

"Another time, when the cook of the mess (as drunk as a lord an' quarelin' mad) come chasin' down the street with a carvin' knife, runnin' like h——ll fer one of the men, an' was jest on the pint of jabbin' it home, Dick jumped in an' throwed em apart, with never a

thought of bein' stabbed an—'what d'ye mean by disturbin' the peace?' was all he ever said.

"An' the cook? He went off as quiet as a lamb. Sobered so quick that he's swore by the 'young un' ever since.

But Dick had his enemies, too—what man that amounts to anything hasn't set *some* tongues to waggin' the other way? That very act of separatin' the cook from his victim made some fellers in camp fearful mad. I s'pose it was jealousy at seein' sech a kid do the brave.

"The worst of the lot was Jake Sulters—a mean, sneakin' cuss who took the opportunity as Dick was passin' through the mess hall (to a little room at the fur end where him an' ole Joe et their grup in quiet), to throw a crust of bread right square agin Dick's back.

"You know how them things go with a hull crowd of men lookin' on to laff at the one what gets beat—whether he happens to be the better feller or not—but, quick as a flash, Dick wheeled about, afore Jake Sulters had time to wink, an' walkin' straight up to the strappin' feller, he looked him calmly in the eye.

" 'Did you throw that crust?'

" 'I did,' sez Jake, kind of sneerin', 'an' what's a goin' to happen now?'

" 'Jest this,' sez Dick, an he picks him up by the scruff of the neck an' throws him out. 'Would anyone else like to follow suit?' he asks, kind of quiet, with a flashin' eye, an' you can jest bet they cheered like mad fer Dick had a will that c'd beat his strength.

"After all, the whole secret of the game is keepin'

cool, but not one man in ten can do it in a crowd, when it comes to the pint of danger.

"It reminds me of an adventure I once had with side-winders (though side-winders is more like wimmen)—they both have their peculiarities, an' when you've once got the trick of managin' either, they're jest no trouble at all. Yes, I've had heaps of experience with the critters—not meanin' wimmen, but side-winders.

"A Moqui snake-dance ain't in it with what I've gone through. Haven't seen a snake-dance yet, I s'pose. No? Well, folks seldom does till they've been in the Territory longer than you all have. Kind of hard travelin' up that way. Country's infested with snakes and Injuns. It means ridin' over miles and miles of the Painted Desert—long, hot days, and short, cool nights, campin' under the stars. I'm to take some ole parties up there next month; they want to study the ceremonies—goin' to write a book an' all that.

"The reason the Moquis have so little excitement when it comes to snakes is, because they, long ago, caught right on to their job. Of course, the problem's gettin' simpler, too, because the snakes is learnin' to accommodate theirselves to noo conditions—retreatin' into sort of snake reservations, same as the Injuns—but that wan't so in the early days. I remember well that summer. It was August, an' the whole desert was like a garden. I was guidin' some explorers through the Canyon Country. They was expectin' fire an' brimstone, an' there, stretchin' 'roun' on every side, was the black and white grama grasses fresh an' green after the summer rains. Wild flowers galore! Sunflowers an'

marigolds, dazzlin' your eyes; mariposa lilies ez white ez snow, an' Injun paint-brushes flamin' red. Blue blossoms, pink flowers an' all so unexpected that my party was rubbin' their eyes hard to make sure of bein' awake; they was that amazed at sech goins on in the Desert.

"It was all mighty gay till evenin' come, and we'd made down our beds on the shiftin' sand. The nights is ez cold as the days is warm on the desert; so we spread our blankets near the fire and gradually begun droppin' to sleep; though coyotes howlin' on the hills with now and then the far-away bark of a timber-wolf or the long screechin' of a puma, miles up on the San Francisco Peaks ain't the sweetest kind of a lullerby, an' sort of inclines a man to keep clutchin' his gun.

"I'm a right smart sleeper myself, an' didn't notice nothin' except afterwards I remembered of dreamin' that I'd been caught under a avalanche an of feelin' like a ton's weight was on top of me. But it was a heap wusser than snow, as you'll agree when you've heered all.

"Well," the "Baron" paused. By a series of adroit maneuvers he had brought his audience back to the point where his story had been interrupted. Their very interest in Richard Wood had been manipulated for his own advantage and now, with an intuitive faculty for enhancing the value of the dramatic moment, he could not resist an impressive cæsura; "it was along about two o'clock, I should say, that I heered a long, blood-curdlin' yell, like a wild-cat stranglin'; I threw off my blanket an' was on my feet gettin' ready to fire my

gun (fer I was plumb sure there was wild animals of some sort attackin' one of my party).) But no sooner did I get my eyes good an' open than I seen a sight to make yer blood run cold.

"'What t' hell! It's rattle-snakes!' I screeched, an' by the horns of Satan, I could swear that every inch of blanket which covered a man was a writhin', twistin', squirmin' mass of side-winders what had crawled up to enjoy a nap by the fire. The hollerin' that had woke me was from a pore feller who had once had delirium tremens an' when he opened his eyes kind of sudden he thought he'd got em again from the bad whiskey we'd brung along—fer sickness.

"Of course, it was throwin' off my blanket so quick that let *me* out easy, but there was all them other pore devils afraid to stir fer fear of angerin' the snakes, an' yet shakin' so hard with nervous chills that the dog-on critters begun waken' up of theirselves—rattlin' an' hissin' an' rarin' up their heads most vicious.

"'Murder! Help!' yelled the misable wretches, their hair standin' on end an' their eyes well nigh burstin' out of their heads. It was the awfulest scene I've ever saw. All of them snakes gettin' readier an' readier to strike, with me standin' helpless before them onlucky beggars, my mind all froze up with horror.

"Then all of a sudden, it come to me what to do. Snatchin' my red handkercher from aroun' my neck, I tore it into fine strips an' bindin' them to a short switch, as quick as possible, behold, I had a instrument somewhat resemblin' the Moqui prayer-sticks. With that I began teasin' one of the reptiles that was lyin'

a little on the outskirts of the army till I'd got him good an' roused. Then ticklin' his head an' twirlin' the thing before his eyes, I soon had him broad awake an' so angry that he follered my lead, lookin' all the while as wicked as Satan himself. Of course, when I had him alone it was no trouble at all to finish him with a stone or a heavy stick or, when worst come to worst, with a shot from my gun.

"Well, gentlemen, I kep' that up till I'd cleaned off one blanket an' rescued the man underneath. Then I started him to workin' in the same fashion an' after he'd got up his courage, we went along faster. But by this time, as ye may imagine, it was broad day, an', with the sun smilin' down most cordial from above, the heat of the fire, and the comfortin' warmth of the men below the blankets, the critters grew a little more restless. Three and four, sometimes six, begun wakin' up at the same moment, which made things a little too lively, an' I was jest about desperate (seein' the other feller was new to the snake-charmin' business an' bein' an' amateur actor, was almost frantic with stage fright as soon as the exhibition promised to end disastrous, after all).

" 'Neednecsity bein' the mother of invention,' however, made me hit upon a plan that finished the thing up quick. It happened by accident when I see three angry rattlers wakin' up at the same instant, an' all (havin' seen my flamin' red charm) startin' briskly towards me at once. Fortunately, one of 'em got a little ahead of the rest an' begun tackin' sideways, like a sailboat, in my direction, when the second

snake, not noticin' nothin' but the charm, lit out, followin' hard after Number One, an' Number Three, likewise, come slidin' an' twistin' along, most graceful, with his beady black eyes glued to that durned charm. Then it was that I lost my head complete, twirlin' the thing aroun' an' aroun' till I was so dizzy I couldn't see, an' was expectin' almost any instant to feel them three pair of poisonous fangs sendin' me by a short cut to the Moqui heaven where snakes is called 'yer brother.'

"How long it was before I come to, I don't egzackly know, but when I did I looked aroun' sort of dumbfoundered at findin' myself still alive an' wonderin' what had struck them blamed snakes—an' sure as I'm settin' here before ye this minute, they was chasin' each other 'roun' an' 'roun' in a circle like mad, with me settin' there as safe as I am right in the middle of this here room, fer ye see, gentlemen, they'd forgot all about me an' the prayer-stick, an' all the other rattlers an' each one was follerin' the other hard with murder in his eye.

Then, as the circle kep' narrowin' an' narrowin' each snake meanwhile gettin' closer to his prey, a strange thing happened.

"All of a sudden, the third snake, which was a little fresher in the race and less winded than the others, ketches up to the second snake, an' quick as a flash, with one big gulp, swallers Number Two down whole. The first snake was by this time far behind his quarry (because, you understand, the third snake's former location in the circle, was now left vacant, him havin'

usurped the place of the second snake who was just then occupyin', somewhat against his will, the third snake's skin).

Jest draw a picture of the sitooation, an' you can get the idee most perfect," and the "Baron," with ingenious candor, prepared to demonstrate the proposition. "At the time, I was settin' near that d——d circle, starin' kind of wild to see what was goin' to happen next, but since then, I've figgered it all out an' it's most simple pervidin' ye c'n see it in yer mind's eye.

Of course the third snake was now mighty clost to the first snake's tail (an' as rattlers never faces square about when they've once got started in a certain direction, until they've done what they started out to do) it looked as though Number Three was boun' to win, by all the odds, fer Number One was two-thirds of a circle behind his tail an' they both kep' flyin' 'roun' an' 'roun' without stoppin'.

"There's one thing, however, that ye mustn't fergit, namely, that Number One had a handicap because pore ole Number Three, now carryin' double, soon found movin' not quite so easy; but, as snakes is accustomed to swallerin' most anything, he didn't seem to mind nothin' except the disconcertin' sound of the second snake's rattles, which, comin' from his own insides, kep' up a sort of muffled juet with his own rattles, an' made him feel, I guess, like he had the jim-jams. Anyway, purty soon, he seemed to get sort of rattled, an' from that pint on got to movin' so slow that Number One ketched him up without much trouble an', all in a minute, gulped the hull blamed outfit in one big mouthful.

Well,'' the ''Baron's'' pause was more effective than words, ''I guess Number One wasn't quite countin' on turnin' himself into a snake mausoleum, an' it certainly did look, fer a while as though he had bit off more than he could chew—that is to say, he'd swallered more than he could manage. Anyway, he laid sort of still an' languid durin' what seemed like five minutes, an' then (feelin' maybe, more like his ole self), he started to slide along kind of slow and cumbersome, toward a flat rock, near by, where he was calculatin', no doubt, to sleep it off.

''But, holy smoke, jest like a shot he seemed to go completely off his base—rarin' an' staggerin' an' pitchin' and plungin' about most fearful, like a man in a fit, because what little sense he had left fersook him entirely the minute he heered himself rattlin' a sort of chorus with some parts in a loud, clear tenor, some kind of soft and far away, an' others mejum but strong, like the continual strummin' of deep base drums. It was a weird noise fer sure, an' so awful clear did it sound that the pore crazy snake flopped down in the sand, as limp as a rag an' breathin' his last.

''Well, gentlemen, many opinions has been expressed, an' more remarks made regardin' sech a marvel. Hank Haskins says it's the first time he ever knowed of *any* critter playin' his own funeral march. The boss has described it as 'the rattler's swan-song,' but *I've* allus said that to me it seemed like the incarnation of that death-rattle that we're allus readin' about an' never hearin'.

''What become of all them dead rattlers? I don't

know, gentlemen. We was too wore out with the grewsome experience (which was like a homopathic cure fer most of them pore explorers, seein' as how what fear brung on terror took away, an' the only way I could get em to lie still an' quit hollerin' while I performed my miracles was by shoutin', 'Don't move ef ye value yer d——nd lives, otherways yere mummies fer good'). No, *we* didn't care much fer souveneers, an' all come away without a single skin er a solitary rattle to bear out our testimony. I only recollect that some days later when we rode into Prescott my health was drunk at the ole Diana Saloon, an' these was the toasts: 'To Saul, who slew his thousands,' says one. 'Not much, shouted Hank Haskins, who was loafin' 'roun' the bar, 'more like, it's David, fer already, in the tellin', the number has riz to tens of thousands', says Hank.

CHAPTER IV.

"A man, he was of cheerful yesterdays and confident to-morrows."

"Is Mr. Freeman disengaged?"

With a negative answer on the tip of his tongue, the office functionary hesitated, for the questioner, in spite of his youth, had the air of one accustomed to admittance wherever it might be sought—and then with a "please be seated while I see," he decided to take the card of John Treverin to the great financier.

In the sanctum sanctorum a directors' meeting was in progress, but Robert Freeman's frown of annoyance changed so quickly to a whimsical smile as the name on the pasteboard met his eye, that the clerk's perfunctory message seemed to radiate something of pleasure in his own discernment as he returned to the stranger with the announcement that Mr. Freeman would be at leisure within the next half-hour, and that he hoped Mr. Treverin could wait.

It appeared that Mr. Treverin could, and he seemed, moreover, to find the prospect diverting rather than a bore, for there was something about these busy offices overlooking "the street" that appealed to his present mood. It might have been the craving of his latent energies for direction; it might have been only that Freeman & Company represented a side of his grandparent that John Treverin had never known, for it was

but four years since the name, apparently a power in this world of lower New York, had first defined for the boy his mother's father.

How little he knew after all of the new forces that had crept into his life since that wild night of his father's death: since that long ride over the desert when, wrapped in the misery of his own dull apathy he had paid little heed to the mighty floods, to the turbid torrents of liquid sand that swept through broad parched river beds where small clear streams were wont to flow. The impassable fords, the wrecked bridges, the slow and toilsome journey over unfrequented roads and round-about trails to that little town beyond the mountains where the final rites had been performed, seemed all a part of an evil dream, a weary progress through some fitful nightmare—emanating in a wilderness of solitude to vanish with the eternal silence of those deserts whose vast waste lands he had known from childhood.

Then had followed the finding of his father's letter which, with its vital message from the dead, had transformed the grave of a hope into the cradle of an inspiration. Its contents written upon his brain in the throbbing moment of a first impression could be recalled at will. "My dear Son:—" it read—"In the event of my death, before you shall have reached the age of twenty-one, I wish you to communicate with your grandfather, whose address I enclose, and to await his reply before making any plans for the future."

Upon the unsubdued passion of his grief with its

wild longing for more detailed explanation the terse business-like sentence had fallen with a brevity that seemed almost cruel and yet, in the light of subseessence of its power, for did not compliance necessiquent events, he now realized dimly that therein lay the tate action and had not action eliminated the responsibility of decision?

The response that came over the wires in reply to his own telegram was concise and to the point: instructing him where to meet his grandfather's emissary, who would leave New York at once. And thus he had said good-bye to the Territory, to his home and to Richard Wood—shaking off the vague oppression of changed conditions with that buoyancy which youth will ever bring to the large promise of an untried future.

The first meeting with his grandfather had taken place in the serene atmosphere of the ancestral library, where the boy had felt for the first time the pervasive influence of race. The sensation, which was entirely new and quite apart from that inspired in him by the striking living personality of his forceful grandfather, had been in fact a sudden and intense realization of how much he had in common with those staid portraits on the walls whose colorful dignity, mellowed by age and the "tone of time," glowed out of their quaint old frames (so dimly rich in the half-light), with a subtle suggestiveness that gave him a sense of individual possession in their historic past.

His isolation from all family ties had not prepared him for the quick response to a call of blood which he

had experienced upon the entrance of his grandfather and he had found himself at a loss when he tried later to account for the instant birth of their mutual understanding.

During the four busy years that followed he had entered into the new life with all the healthy zest of youth. The lack of disciplined thinking had made college something of a grind, but there was the compensation of enthusiasms whose vitality had not been dissipated through years of preparation and an inherent tendency for true culture which promised to make the scaling of such real heights as lie beyond the hurdles of academic competition natural and easy.

His sense of values was the result of innate appreciation rather than the outgrowth of the over-refinements of civilization and he seemed as yet unaware of the existence of those artificial pinnacles surrounding the dead level of lower plains. He had responded to his opportunities with the unconscious simplicity and keen pleasure of those who possess a natural taste for the best things of life as distinguished from that avidity for worldly advantage which so often degenerates into a greedy appetite for place.

Winters crowded with work and summers filled with the diversions offered by England and the Continent had left little time for introspection, and thus he had drifted to the end of his senior year with indefinite ambitions which had yet to crystalize into form.

It was just at this point, when forces long dormant

were clamoring for direction that he had received a letter from Richard Wood.

* * * * * * *

Robert Freeman leaned back in his chair, his vivid face in shadow, his fine head silhouetted against the strong light that poured through a window at his back, and in the energized quiescence of his well-set shoulders there was no suggestion of age.

It was a moment of relaxation such as had rarely come in the forty years of his business career and, although he said little as his grandson entered, the frank cordiality of his smile and the eager grasp of his hand hinted at a pleasure which he did not express. "I did not know that you were in town"—there was a questioning inflection in his tone.

"I only arrived a few moments ago and, as this seemed the place to talk business, and that is what I am here for to-day, I came down at once," responded the younger man, simply.

"Something wrong at Cambridge?" and the old man smiled quizically.

A four years' acquaintance with his grandson had left Robert Freeman still expecting the reaping of some startling crop of wild oats such as his world had taught him to expect from the abounding vitality of early manhood and he had not yet ceased to wonder that Jack should have been able to take care of his own harvests, at least to the extent of keeping within the limits of a very generous allowance.

His intercourse with the boy had brought him, so far, every pleasure except that which is the outgrowth of a

generous sympathy toward another's failings, and to-day he almost hoped that some petty gambling debt or harmless escapade had brought his grandson to a realizing sense of need. Of course, he meant to play the part of stern parent, just at first; that was a duty which he owed to society, but he had a shrewd suspicion of the depths that lay beneath the unruffled surface of John Treverin's nature, and he had never yet been fortunate enough to see them stirred. If the indulgent tone in which he put his question was calculated to invite confidence, his grandson's brief reply and calm demeanor gave no hint of unpleasant disclosures.

"Things are well enough at Cambridge, sir, but" ——there was a moment of hesitation—"I have just had a letter from Richard Wood."

"Yes," there was a note of inquiry in the older man's voice. It was evident that the fact did not interest him, that he wondered why it should have any special significance for the boy.

"And he says," John Treverin seemed not to have noticed the monosyllabic interruption, "that the Queen Elizabeth Mine is for sale."

"Was that the extent of his information? I, as your guardian, received a communication to that effect some time ago."

"And you considered it to my interest to let the mine go?"

"I decided not to interfere with the affairs of the company."

"May I ask why, sir?"

"Because I saw no reason for objection."

"Then you are not aware of the value of the mine." The sentence was a statement, expressing absolute conviction, in which it was impossible to detect the slightest trace of a question.

"Really, I had not thought it worth while to inquire."

"And yet, you are a sagacious business man." His grandson's tone was thoughtful. He was evidently nettled, he felt that there must be something behind the words which he did not understand, some unexplained reason for an indifference so elaborate for an unconcernedness so strangely out of character with what he knew of the man who had given it expression.

Robert Freeman smiled. "Your inference is far from flattering, and yet I must confess to small faith in mining. Many a talent that, through proper manipulation, might have multiplied into much has been buried forever in some deep hole in the ground."

"And yet millions have been made along those lines," the young man spoke eagerly.

"And more money has been sunk without even the compensation that comes out of other failures, wherein one man's loss may mean another's gain."

"You ignore the possibility of scientific knowledge and practical experience. You forgot that mining is not *all* intuition"—the youngerman spoke with some heat. "To be sure it may be a more purely creative form of accumulation than is possible here, but"——

The boy paused. His attitude up to this point had been the result of no deep-rooted conviction, but rather that wholesome love of argument which is merely an in-

clination to give a fair hearing to the other side, that intolerance of another's prejudgments which might later mellow into the philosophy of accepting them as seriously as he would come to recognize his own.

Robert Freeman was hardly prepared for the sudden attack upon his pet prejudices. He had, however, that saving sense of humor, which makes a man quick to realize an ironical turn of fortune, and sufficient self-control to keep his temper in an emergency.

"Is it not enough," he asked quietly, "that everything your father ever made went into the development of this mine? And what does it amount to after all? What return did he ever get from the expenditure of his abilities and his money?"

"And yet," John Treverin spoke slowly, thoughtfully, "does not that very fact prove his belief in its possibilities? Not many men are willing to back their faith with their fortunes. My father was regarded in the Territory as a man of large experience in mining matters and Richard Wood corroborates his opinion of the property."

The older man, who had been watching the boy earnestly, interrupted with some impatience. He resented his interest in this subject—an interest which he could not share. "And even suppose there were anything in it? Why should it affect you?"

"Only because," the boy spoke with deliberation, "before the arrival of this letter, I was beginning to think of what I meant to do."

Robert Freeman's keen eyes flashed. Here, at last, he saw the practical point at issue. Once again he held

the key to the situation which had seemed for a moment to be slipping from his grasp.

"Of course, I knew that such a question would present itself to you sooner or later, but I believed you were too much engrossed at present to care to take the matter up. Otherwise I should have been glad to discuss the subject with you at any time. I had thought" —the older man spoke guardedly—he did not add that he had planned—"I had thought that, providing you did not care to take up a profession or to study for an additional year or two at some foreign university, you might like to travel extensively. You have seen nothing of the far East—in fact, you have not gone beyond the beaten highways of Europe. We can put the Little Corsican in commission, make a tour of the world—I might arrange to take a long holiday—explore such out-of-the-way places as attracted you, together, and then"—— there was a sudden gleam in the grey eyes, whose remarkable depth and brilliance was the vitalizing note in features whose singular asceticism might have seemed otherwise too unworldly—"when you had gotten as much pleasure as you cared for, I had hoped that you might be ready (after getting your grasp of the business) to step into my place here."

"'And what does 'here' represent?" There was a smile underlying his grandson's words, but the eyes that included the room in their glance were grave.

"The question is in point." It was to the eyes that Robert Freeman responded. "I had forgotten that this is the first time you have been down. What does 'Freeman & Company' represent? Self-analysis is never

pleasant, but I suppose that this would be described as one of the oldest and most conservative institutions of its kind."

"A definition is not exactly what I meant to ask for." The young man's interruption was an eager protestation. "Jenkins gave me that, years ago when, with an instinct, naturally tutorial, he decided that my dense ignorance should be enlightened. He described you, I believe, as a private banker, exclusive to the point of not bothering about small affairs of any kind and (Jenkins had a turn for philosophy) he told me that it meant a great deal to be recognized as one of the strong financial powers of the East; that it made one of almost international importance—far more so, indeed, than is the case with the petty sovereigns of Europe. So you see, sir, I have some appreciation of the future you are holding out to me.

"But"—the young man paused; he was evidently trying to express an idea that had not yet been formulated in thought—"by stepping into your place, should I not become definitely identified with the East? I have always felt," again he waited tentatively, "I scarcely know how to put it, because I am not aware of any sentiment in the matter, but—I have always felt that I had certain affiliations with the West."

"I cannot see why." Robert Freeman was frowning heavily. "Has the West ever done anything for you in the past? Does the West offer you anything now?"

"I hardly see my way to an answer at present." For the first time John Treverin felt a sudden revolt against his grandfather's point of view. Everything in

his nature opposed itself to a system of logic so selfish. "I do not know that it has—I cannot say that it does but I had rather thought that I should like to do something for the West."

"Cannot the West take care of itself?" So ironical was the tone that his question was almost a challenge.

And then it was that Robert Freeman, taken suddenly off guard, made one of those false moves for which men too often blame Fate.

The boy's eyes flashed and he squared his shoulders proudly.

"You must understand that I had no intention of putting that section of country in the position of wanting such small help as I might be able to give. I believe that it is sufficient unto itself. It will work out its own salvation, never fear." His voice rang with something that had not been there before—something that sounded very like the personal note. "The West does not need the East."

His grandfather, detecting the partisan spirit which had already crept into the boy's manner, and filled with a vague alarm, a sense of futile impotence, let go too suddenly the threads of reason which had, so far, given him the control of the situation. The amused tolerance that had enabled him, up to this point, to discuss the subject with a certain impersonal aloofness, gave place to a biting sarcasm which could be plainly detected in the tone with which he said, "In that case the East might learn to do without the West."

Too late he realized the folly of so trivial a retort. The boy's energies had found direction at last (even as

one of the sudden cloud-bursts of the land that gave him birth, sweeping along the lines of least resistance finds at last a natural outlet through the dry channel of the first arroya in its path) and, gathering himself to his full height, he rose slowly to his feet. There were only the burning eyes and a slight quiver of the nostril to indicate the strong feeling under which he labored. It was a full minute before he could gain sufficient control of his voice to articulate the words which came at last vibrating with passion. "Then, by God, sir, we won't wait for you to learn. We'll go it alone—*now.*" And turning on his heel with a quick bow he was gone.

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Not until the slow closing of the heavy door had announced the fact of his departure did Robert Freeman comprehend the significance of the pronoun—and then —the strong features, whose exquisite chiseling had resisted each withering touch of age, appeared suddenly drawn and very old and, against the dark wood of his high-backed chair, the proud head—all at once—seemed very white.

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As John Treverin came out into Broad street he wondered if his temper had betrayed him into an exhibition of what his grandfather would term "mock heroics." He thought himself too eminently practical to be swayed by motives which influence the dreamer and, now that the heat of the moment had passed, he felt a little ashamed of the grandiloquent oath which must have struck his grandfather's cultivated ear as a rather violent display of strong language, in sharp contrast

with the less forceful but more refined swearing of the effete East, which he was accustomed to hearing at his club. He suspected that, after all, he might have been a fool.

The hurrying crowds and congested traffic impressed him as never before with the vast importance of the city's life, with its concentrated activities, with its broad opportunities. He believed that it would be interesting to get into the thick of the fight if only one had it in him to make his presence felt.

While pausing on the corner of Wall Street, during the passing of a loaded truck, he caught distant glimpses of the shipping along the East River, and by the time he reached Broadway the cool breezes that blew up from the Battery had swept away the last vestiges of his anger. He was not given to introspection and his instinctive aversion to all forms of sentimentalism had preserved him from the pitfalls of the imaginative, but at last he was feeling the stirrings of a high ambition and his blood leapt at the thought of conflict as his fingers had used to tingle in anticipation of some boyish scuffle. This was a broad stage that he had decided to leave, and in the uplift of the moment in the sublime egoism of youth he believed that he might have played his part not unworthily—even here.

CHAPTER V.

"Seven times tried that judgment is
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss."

He did not telegraph Richard Wood until after reaching Chicago and then, only to announce the probable date of his own arrival in Tucson, at which point, his message read, "Please wire me where to find you." For it was to this man, whom his father's judgment and the experiences of his own early boyhood had taught him to trust, that he instinctively turned in the sudden change of fortune which had left him master of his own destiny.

Whether or not the necessity of the occasion demanded it, time alone would make clear, but John Treverin had elected to consider the angry parting with his grandfather in the light of a final Rubicon of choice and, as he was not of those who "draw back," all that remained to be done was to get over troublesome details with the least possible delay. Hence it was that the long-drawn-out gayeties of commencement were cut to his own order through a "hasty business summons West," for he had not the heart to let this breach with his grandfather become public scandal through his own failure to claim a well-earned degree, nor did he pos-

sess a conscience which could lightly throw all responsibility to the winds.

His last letter to Robert Freeman had been a manly avowal of an indebtedness which he hoped at some time to be able to repay and a frank acknowledgment of that deeper obligation which he confessed it would be an insult ever to attempt to assume, for even in the hot-headed impetuosity of his decision John Treverin had some faint realization of what he owed to those four years of affectionate intimacy with such a man as his grandfather. He had thought best, he wrote (if he could do so without his grandfather's disapproval), to retain the balance of that allowance which had been placed to his account in bank, because as he ingeniously expressed it, he would need a small capital for such traveling expenses as might be necessary before he could arrive on the field of his choice. With regard to the mine he had only one request to make, which was that his grandfather, as trustee for him, as a majority stockholder, would oppose its sale until such time as he himself could be in a position to take the matter in hand.

On the whole, John Treverin believed that his had been a large and impersonal manner of discussing what might have been vulgarly termed a quarrel, and he congratulated himself on the breadth of mind, the sense of detachment, which had enabled him to carry out his own will with such dignity and equipose. If, at times, there was a twinge of regret at leaving the proud old man alone in that noble despair which must ever follow upon the wreckage of high hopes, he put it away

with the very definite logic of the individualist (than whose selfishness there is none more ruthless) that every man must carve out his own career, no matter what the cost to others.

"Now at any rate," he told himself, as he passed through the lobby of the Auditorium Hotel, after having sent his telegram ("the die is cast: my future is the future of Arizona," and almost in the same instant that the thought flashed through his brain he heard the sound of his own name.

"Hello, Treverin, how did you turn up here? Thought you were at Cambridge doing the honors as well as receiving them. You needn't tell me you didn't get any, for I know better. I have all the latest college news from the youngest frater and he says you've been one of the shining lights—'bosh,' d'ye say?—Of course it's bosh when you're out, but it's mighty fine as long as you're in and you can't have been on the outside more than a day or two at most."

It was Bob Travers, an upper classman, who on several momentous occasions, had been a champion of his cause when, as a misguided freshman, "Treverin, the plucky little beast," had run counter to the generally accepted decrees of that body which arrogates to itself the office of arbiter elegantorum in the undergraduate world in so far at least as the conduct of the more recently appointed members may concern the dignity of the "old guard."

At almost any other time he would have been glad to see Travers, but why in the name of stupid "Mischance" should they have come upon one another just

at the moment when he, John Treverin, was most anxious to avoid persons connected with his recent past—until that past should have been submerged in a future of personal achievement. To obviate explanations, therefore, he announced somewhat precipitately, that he had business in the West demanding immediate attention and was hastily changing the subject to a topic less embarrassing to himself when Travers interrupted to ask.

"What part of the West? I'm bound for Arizona myself, with a couple of friends: one of them, an Englishman—younger son—an attache of the British legation: fine fellow, Lionel, but as mum as an oyster. The other's a little French Count, who thinks he wants to kill big game, so we're off for the 'wild and wooly' tomorrow, via the Southern Pacific, and I only wish you were going our way."

"It looks as though I were," answered Treverin calmly, adapting himself to the necessity of circumstances which had developed through the conversation as quickly as he might have caught a ball on the rebound; "that is, if you are booked to arrive in Tucson on the 28th."

"Just my bully good luck," cried Travers heartily. "Dine with us to-night, won't you? I'd like to have you meet the others before we get started." And with a final suggestion as to their rendezvous the irrepressible one was gone, leaving young Treverin to wonder that two years in diplomacy should have brought about so little change apparently in the volatile character of his friend: for Robert Travers, as yet an under-secre-

tary in the service, made no secret of his aspirations for a diplomatic career.

They had not yet finished dinner and the little Count was in the middle of a thrilling yarn apropos of tiger hunting in India, when their attention was suddenly drawn to a table in the far corner of the room, about which some eight or ten men were seated and where it was evident that a sort of banquet was in progress. To Travers and to Treverin, placed in such a way that they could take in the situation at a glance, it was clear that some one was on the point of proposing a toast—a toast which, it seemed he wished, drunk standing, for there was the hurried pushing back of chairs, the lifting of glasses on high and above the varied sound of other voices and the humdrum noises of the room they caught the movement of his lips, the clear articulation of his words. What he said was, "To Arizona!"

"Shall we join?" cried Travers impulsively; and while his glance included the two foreigners it was toward his own countryman that he leaned. Treverin's response came without hesitation, but in his voice was the slow distinctness of an echo that, born in far distant waves of sound, vibrates still with the hidden impulse of first emotions and, in a silence almost oppressive, the impromptu toast was drunk "To Arizona." It was one of those tense moments that may have a significance far deeper than that apparent on the surface, and the silent Englishman, Waldergrave, spoke first. "I did not quite catch the point, don't you know, but if the cause is as good as the wine one need not press the matter of its origin," he drawled.

"Who in thunder are they, anyway?" questioned Travers, with interest, but Treverin hardly heard, for with sudden attention he was studying the profile of a man, whose full face turned toward him for one fleeting moment had called up vague recollections: and, groping blindly along the keys of impression, he soon touched the vibrant chords of memory when, suddenly, it all came to him in a flash. He saw the little town, its main street stretching hot and long under the midsummer sun and beneath the grateful shade of a huge cottonwood tree, in the plaza, two men and a boy had paused. There was the sound of hoofs beating upon the road. Nearer and nearer they came until at length, out of a cloud of dust, there appeared four coal-black stallions with flying manes; and the man behind them —the charioteer (for the gorgeous trappings of the turn-out and the dashing appearance of its handsome Jehu made "driver" a far too prosaic description of him who handled the lines with so elaborate a flourish) —had a name that escaped him even now, but he recalled distinctly that Richard Wood had told how this man, with the fiery steeds, had bought the "Bald Eagle," at sheriff's sale, for a thousand or two, at most.

"There's some mining swindle in his head, I'm afraid," added Wood, "and, in spite of his vulgarity, the man has a certain scintilating flash of something that looks perilously like power which might carry him through his promoting schemes, but the trouble is *he* may go scot free, after robbing his dupes of their little all." Then the quick response of his father had come,

in a voice that the boy could never forget. "Such men are the most dangerous enemies of the Territory."

And so it was that John Treverin, before going to his room for the night, glanced casually over the hotel register, not doubting that he would recognize on sight that elusive name which he felt sure must belong with a face that he could have sworn he had seen before, although he confessed to himself that the man had been "toned down" into the semblance of a more gentlemanly type of speculator than that which his memory carried.

He was, however, on the point of turning away, at last, with the uncomfortable feeling of having failed in his search, when he heard a page, who had just come up to the desk, inform the night clerk that Doctor Fowler wasn't in his room and he couldn't locate the "gent" anywhere."

"Why, he's right out there in the lobby, stoopid—the tall one with the big party in tow, all going to Arizona, I bet, for he was asking about trains, not five minutes ago," with which piece of gratuitous information calculated, evidently, to enhance his own importance with an inferior, the busy functionary began forthwith to devote his attention to a newly arrived guest, and Treverin turned away just in time to see the boy hand his telegram to a large man with keen eyes, which were remarkably alert—so much so, indeed, that they seemed to be constantly on guard—and a manner, almost aggressive in its assumption of sang-froid.

Doctor Fowler (and the name was a new one to Treverin), being at the moment engaged in conversa-

tion with a thin, active little man—who bore the stamp of pedagogue strongly upon him and carried about that subtle atmosphere of the schoolroom, which is proof infallible of an evolution from that earliest pose of the disciplinarian—turned with a start as the page, having made several vain attempts to attract his attention, touched him lightly on the arm, and then, recovering himself quickly, with a word of apology to his companion, commenced the perusal of a message which appeared to contain good news, judging from the satisfied smile that illumined his countenance, while he read. A second later, as Treverin passed the group on his way to the elevator, he caught the words: "It's from 'Bald Eagle,' gentlemen; they're down thirty-seven feet in solid smelting ore, which is averaging ten per cent. and we're still in it."

CHAPTER VI.

All that glistens is not gold,—
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold,
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms enfold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd.

On the banks of one of those shallow streams which are born in the coolness of mountain solitudes and flow for half a hundred miles or more between tall grasses and noble cottonwoods—themselves the source of this verdant life—to vanish at length amid desert wastes, submerged in a sea of drifting sands: on the banks (in other words) of such a stream as one might find, to-day, in Arizona there was, in the spring of 'ninety-two, a deserted village called Sunshine.

One of those ephemeral mining camps which came into existence in the early 'seventies, when only the highest grades of ore could be profitably mined, Sunshine was rehabilitated and its mines worked successfully in the 'eighties, for the coming of the railroad promised larger returns than could have been expected in days when oxen teams and Missouri mules towed, across the desert, their heavy cargoes of freight. It was then that tradesmen had deserted older and more

settled communities to flock to Sunshine and add their quota in the making of a perfectly appointed town, whose broad streets were flanked by substantial one and two-story buildings, among which the hotel and the store predominated even over the ubiquitous saloon.

But with the exhaustion of its big paying ore bodies came the decline of the booming camp, and at length there arrived a day when orders were received by the local managers to close the works of the three big mining concerns which were operating there.

Merchants rushing hither and thither to secure teams had their stock loaded on wagons within a few hours of the fatal decree and, with the haste of rats fleeing from a sinking ship, such inhabitants as remained soon followed, leaving a single watchman to stand guard over the little city which men had abandoned to the prairie dog and the mountain owl.

Whether or not Sunshine, which had come to be regarded as too poor for profit had inherently the making of one of those ideal mining properties from which, through the extensive operation of low grade deposits, it has been found possible to extract great values by means of the beneficiation of ores, it is not our province to relate. Suffice it to say that, in the beginning of a decade, which brought about those striking changes in treatment and handling, that constant improvement in machinery and method which have revolutionized mining, Sunshine lay dreaming of a dazzling past in the fear of awaking to a problematical future. And, less than five years before this crisis in its existence, one of the mines had changed hands, coming into the posses-

sion of a man who, while he might lack the inclination to inquire into its capacity for legitimate development, realized, at least, that "The Bald Eagle" possessed qualities sufficiently attractive for exploitation, and it was along these lines, therefore, that he set himself to study its possibilities, with an assiduity worthy of a better cause. * * *

The month was April, the hour, sunset, and as a solitary horseman approached the town from the South he experienced that odd sensation of loneliness, such as comes to one in the presence of death, mingled with another feeling, more uncanny, which it was impossible to shake off: a sort of weird expectancy as of one listening in the midst of a profound silence for the resurrection of sound.

At the end of the road, in the distance, one caught a fleeting glimpse of the little settlement, its windows illumined by the red glory of the setting sun and instinctively the horse quickened his pace in anticipation of his own counterpart to the bed and the warm meal which without doubt awaited his rider. But no sound was heard as they entered the village save the echo of solitary hoof beats on the hard smoothness of a deserted street that led past vacant houses, from whose chimneys there issued no welcome smoke: not even the warning bark of a dog disturbed the quiet air, nor did any soul come forth to greet them from one of the half a dozen hotels whose barred doors hinted at the vanquished hopes and forgotten glories of other days when there was not this haunting and melancholy resemblance to the silence of a lonely graveyard.

They had almost reached the end of the street when the horse was brought to a sudden halt in front of a saloon, whose windows displayed with the usual articles employed for such purpose the grim hideousness of a stuffed gila monster, some skins and dried rattles of several species of snake, together with a forbidding looking tarantula and several harmless centipedes preserved in alcohol. There was a fine irony about the little collection of curios which had been gathered, no doubt, to stimulate popular interest in the marvels of the country and had themselves become the incurious guardians of a ghostly solitude. But any such significance was lost upon the man who had dismounted and was fitting a key into the dusty lock that had not been turned since the day when (the house having set up the last round of drinks) coats and hats were hastily donned, front doors closed and the one-time dealer, with his liquid stock, had hied him away to fresh pastures. At length, with a grating sound, the key turned and a heavy door swung on its creaking hinges, revealing an interior which had expressed the last word in elegance to convivial Sunshine. An ornate mirror of huge proportions standing against the wall reflected bottles on shelves, jugs and demijohns in place, glasses behind the bar and the cheerless emptiness of a large room wherein vacant chairs and tables were strewn about in gloomy disarray.

For a moment, the place belonged to the visitor, who paused staring about him with a comprehensive glance that seemed to include a host and guests where there were none, and then—having caught the sound of a

light, firm step on the stair, he seated himself to await its rapid approach.

The person whose entrance had been thus heralded was a hollow-eyed man of shabby appearance, who still bore about him the evidence of having seen better days. His linen, though frayed, showed an exquisite fineness of quality, which might have been attributed to chance had it not been for certain accompanying graces of manner such as could have come to him only through the more definite channels of taste. In other words, Captain Minturn, though battered and worn out of all semblance to his former self, carried still those unmistakable traits of the gentleman which are not to be eradicated (once they have been implanted), even though their first fine flowering may have given place to the rank seed-bearing blossoms of an inglorious aftermath.

"Well, Captain, how goes the world and Sunshine?" It was the man just arrived who spoke, first, with the jovial familiarity of one who recognizes no reserves in another which he would be incapable of feeling himself.

"I can't say much about the world, Doctor Fowler, but Sunshine is resting, sir, resting."

"And what would you think, Captain Minturn, about our waking the old town up?"

"I should say that it is what I've been watching for during the past seven years."

"Then your faith in the mines is as strong as ever?" The man called Fowler, who had been watching his companion narrowly, was at length rewarded by a decided gleam of interest.

"I believe, sir, that there is a fortune in this property, but it will require some years of time to prove it and a cost proportionately great with its reward. The trouble so far has been more hope than money and a man might just as well understand first as last that to come in here expecting to make a mine with only a few thousand dollars in his pocket would be an investment too risky to be called safe. This is a wonderful age, sir, a wonderful age, and mining is keeping pace with its commercial and scientific development. The practical application of new processes is making it possible to treat with profit such low grade ores as we would not have dreamed of bothering about less than a decade ago, and this property has been carefully tested, sir. We are surrounded by some of the most inviting fields in the Southwest, and I verily believe that the ground underneath us contains undeveloped millions of wealth."

There was the eloquence of conviction in his tone, but, as the Captain paused, Fowler, having no taste for the dreams of a visionary (who was said to have staked and lost his all in these very mines), excepting in so far as they might be made subservient to his own more practicable schemes, interpolated the question—"With how small a capital would it look safe to make a beginning?"

Minturn considered a moment before replying and then mentioned an amount so large that even Fowler was amazed. "I mean," added the Captain, by way of explanation, for he had taken the question at its surface value, "that it would not *be* safe to start with less, no matter how it might *look*."

"But," 'Bald Eagle' is no undeveloped prospect: it, at least, has a record as a dividend payer which has not yet been completely effaced from the memory of the public." In his eagerness, the man who called himself Fowler was arguing entirely from his own point of view.

"You forget, sir, that before suspending operations and abandoning the mine, the former company could not make expenses. We won our reputation on a vein of mineralized ore, which was self-fluxing and could be converted into black copper by one simple smelting operation, but that was exhausted long before we shut down, and now"—he finished slowly, with the earnestness of one who has come to realize a certain tragic significance in facts—"our only hope is in complete reconstruction, in the installation of an equipment whereby we may be adequate to handle vast deposits of low-grade ore. There are immense possibilities in copper, sir, of which this generation has hardly conceived, and I should not be surprised to see the day arrive when two and one-half per cent. ore may be treated with profit, but there is truth in the adage that 'it takes a mine to make a mine' of that sort and it takes patience as well." Captain Minturn had a voice so musical that it raised the simple gift of speech to the higher level of a fine art, and this quality of euphony was enhanced by a pronunciation characteristic of certain sections of the Southeast, where the habit of gliding lightly over one's r's, and of giving to vowel sounds their full quantity, endows the language with an exactness and melody, a smooth-

ness and harmony, rarely found elsewhere and so difficult to describe that many of those who attempt it, too often succeed, only, in producing degenerate dialects wherein the individuality of the cultivated is caricatured to the point of provincialism.

Fowler, who had been listening intently to such phrases as one might utilize in a prospectus, laughed sceptically at the prohetic glimpse into a future too remote to make a definite appeal to his own ambitions. He was the type of man to whom the construction of a lie was possible only through his perception of some corresponding principle of truth. In other words, he was one of those plausible scoundrels whose specious arguments would have to be sufficiently convincing to run the gauntlet of his own suspicions before he could undertake to employ them upon others, and hence his maneuvers to enlist in his enterprise a man whose understanding of the property and its needs was unquestioned. It was his intention to take Minturn into his confidence as far as he could do so with safety, and therefore he proceeded to map out his plan with ingenious candor.

"My idea would be to recapitalize for a million—giving the stock a par value of ten dollars—setting aside eighty thousand shares of this for development, if a majority of the stockholders consent to the plan in consideration of a contract on my—on the part of the company to finance and conduct the future operations of the mine. It might give us a good start to bring a few men out here to look about the place and talk over details with you; we might thus succeed in arousing

an interest that would keep things going and make a big thing out of the mine. In the meantime what do you think of our setting a few men to work so the place won't look quite so dead; it gives a man the blues, at sight, and''—he waited a moment, considering—''first impressions have their value, you know.''

Captain Minturn's manner was thoughtful. ''Yes,'' he said slowly, ''there is certain work that might be legitimately begun, as soon as we have the assurance of sufficient capital, but I've grown conservative, Doctor, about going ahead too fast. You see I've had my own experience''—there was a note of apology in his voice for the necessity of introducing a personal element into conversation of a purely business character. He hesitated a moment and then—''We had been running for months at a loss and there came a day when the men tried to seize both ore and engines, which were guarded at the point of a pistol, until we could market what we had and pay them the amount which they had agreed to take.'' He shivered slightly as brave men will at the recollection of defeat, even though they may have fought valiantly against heavy odds—then, with a rueful smile, ''one would hardly care to go through a scene like that again.''

''But pardon me, Doctor,'' he added, changing the subject with the quick courtesy of a thoughtful host, ''you must be tired; I had forgotten the hour. Dumford shall prepare something to eat at once and later look after your horse. We had better leave the inspection of the mine until to-morrow, for, as you will remember, things are pretty well locked up—the tunnels

barred by doors, and so forth. It is also too nearly dark to refresh your mind as to locations, for of course you will want to look the place over while you are here and decide where to build the reduction plant. I can probably give you enough statistics, however, to keep us busy to-night and in the morning''—

''It will be impssible,'' Fowler interrupted, ''for me to remain more than an hour or two. There is a full moon at ten o'clock. Dummy can give me a bite and then I shall ride across the valley, if he can let me have a fresh horse—mine is too tired to make time and I must catch an Eastbound train, without fail, to-morrow.''

Fowler's interest in and knowledge of the property itself seemed so strikingly deficient when compared with his enthusiastic plans for its development that there was aroused even in Minturn's mind a vague though momentary uneasiness. ''Could this man be capable of carrying to success an enterprise whose slow germination had occupied his own brain for years?'' he asked himself doubtingly. There was little time for reflection, however, as the Doctor, whose energies seemed to require constant stimulation, began forthwith to plan the restoration of the principal stores, as well as that of the most important hotel, not omitting to draw a glowing picture of the rejuvenation of this very saloon, whose upper floor had been selected as Minturn's headquarters because of its being the most habitable place in Sunshine.

The man referred to as Dummy, who was laying a table in the far corner of the room, with a dexterity

and swiftness that would have seemed remarkable, even had one failed to notice the absence of a thumb and three fingers from his right hand, appeared to be especially interested in the conversation, at this point, for Dummy as watchman and guardian had grown to feel a sense of proprietorship in the emptiness of Sunshine that made him peculiarly sensitive to any suggestions as to its future.

Dummy remembered the town in all its pristine glory. He was moreover the only man who had profited by its downfall, when as barman in the Minerva Saloon (over which he now ruled in the double capacity of host and cook) he had bought the building about to be abandoned, for a nominal sum, at a moment when its one-time owner considered himself particularly fortunate in being able to make "any sale at all."

Squat, low-browed, with coarse, black hair and shifting eyes, Dummy was not exactly the sort of person to inspire confidence, at sight, and yet singularly enough the mysterious disappearance of such valuables as had been left behind in the general hegira had never been laid at his door. His newly acquired interest as a property owner had seemed sufficient explanation of his willingness to remain and, since it was not an easy matter to fill a position which demanded almost complete isolation from one's fellow-beings, Dummy's application had been immediately accepted by the former owners of the property.

Moreover, Dummy had certain innocent and humanizing ambitions which were ingratiating because of their appeal to an average sense of humor. His pur-

chase of an antiquated carry-all, for instance, resplendent in red paint and gorgeous upholstery with his first earnings, laboriously saved, had been the standing joke of Sunshine (whose ramifications extending over the sides and tops of the mountains afforded small opportunity for the display of state-vehicles); and after several vain attempts to press it into service as a sort of stage running between Sunshine and the railroad junction the ornate carry-all had been relegated to the barn and a state of innocuous desuetude where its reputation as an interesting antiquity was enhanced by a popular enthusiasm which had been conspicuously lacking on those few occasions when certain adventurous spirits, having essayed to enjoy the sensation of jolting in a doubtful grandeur over rough roads, had ended by anathematizing every other means of locomotion than that offered by the recalcitrant burro or a bucking broncho.

Both Dummy and Captain Minturn (who was known to have had a large interest in the company that had formerly owned and operated the mines) had been retained by Fowler, after his purchase of the "Bald Eagle," the former because of his actual value in service, the latter because of a knowledge of the property (to which he clung with a tenacious faith that was, perhaps, the last anchor in a life otherwise hopelessly drifting) that, the wily doctor argued, might sometime prove useful. And, while Fowler (possessed of an understanding sufficiently acute to enable him to distinguish between things which differ) imagined that Dummy might prove to be a valuable assistant in cer-

tain devious ways, he was not unwilling to have him under the indirect surveillance of a man whose honesty of purpose was beyond question, although he realized that Minturn nominally in charge of the property—was to be found in Sunshine only on those infrequent occasions when his presence was required in that section of the Territory, on his own business.

The Captain was a man who had acquired holdings of some value in the Southwest apart from those mining ventures which without yet proving fortunate had so far swallowed up all his available capital. Left an orphan at the age of sixteen, with large estates not far from Mason and Dixon's line, Charlton Minturn had gone just prior to the Civil War to visit a relative living in Texas, and while there, at the beginning of hostilities was fired by a sudden ambition to join the Southern army. Whereupon his guardian, fearing the effect of opposition upon a nature both wild and reckless, had adopted the plan of curbing an impulse through a compromise, with the result that the surprised youth was permitted, nay, even urged, to accompany Captain Hunter and his Texas troops upon their mission of conquest into Arizona, and thus it happened that, in a private capacity, as soldier of fortune, the boy had lived under the stars and bars during three thrilling months in old Tucson. There, in the untrammeled freedom of broad spaces where the almost daily conquest of the savage and the wilderness strengthened the primal bonds of blood and of race (through the white man's struggle with a common foe)—the Confederate Greys had been accorded the same eager

welcome that was extended, later, to California Blues, and young Minturn (removed from the direct influences of partisan politics), with slight conception of the bigness of the original issues, no longer felt that eager lust for battle which had distinguished his first enthusiasm for conflict in which he had chosen sides from the Quixotic impulse of the self-appointed champion rather than from any deep-rooted conviction.

When the war—in which had died so much of the chivalry of a by-gone era—was over, the boy, undisciplined and lacking the patience and strength to cope with changed conditions at home, where life had come to mean either an heroic effort to withstand petty tyrannies or a passive submission to a multiplicity of trivial irritations, had thrown off the galling yoke of an unwelcome responsibility and with the fighting principle strong within him, had withdrawn from the maelstrom of reconstruction, a rebel still, at heart, against all forms of ill-advised paternalism.

Whether it was the accidental impulse of an insatiable "wanderlust" or a more prophetic instinct that directed his inclination toward that part of the Southwest reserved by the Fates as the last stronghold of sectional individualism, Captain Minturn himself would have been unable to tell, because, as yet, that final struggle for the maintenance of Territorial rights against legislative coercion had hardly begun; and, therefore, to all intents and purposes the original motives of the honest Captain in coming to Arizona might have been as palpably those of the self-interested seeker of his own fortune as were the expressed reasons of—Dummy, for instance.

The last named individual, whom we left, by the way, in a corner of the Minerva Saloon, at Sunshine, ostensibly engaged in the simple ceremony of laying a table, but in reality absorbed in the more complicated task of trying to fathom the mental processes of Fowler—started slightly when the Doctor, turning suddenly, addressed him by name.

"You here, Dummy? Well, no matter, and what does mein host think of the prospect of a patronage surpassing the wildest dreams of Sunshine in its palmy days?"

Dummy's manner was gloomy, his tone surly. He resented the Doctor's assumption that he, Dummy, was dull, because he could not reply in glittering generalities. "Dunno," he muttered, "unless it's a sure thing, I guess 't wouldn't pay to stock up."

"But you've *got* to stock up, man," cried the Doctor, striding up and down the room impatiently, "there's no surer way to squelch a booming town than to ignore the existence of its mighty thirst."

"Yet *I* don't start without a guarantee." Dummy's stubbornness increased in inverse proportion to the Doctor's eagerness.

"A guarantee of what, you f——?" the Doctor caught himself just in time.

"Why—a guarantee that this here talk of resumin' ain't all goin' up in smoke, that it's not to end like any other durned flash in the pan." Dummy possessed, at any rate, the power of making himself understood.

"I'll talk it over with you later, Dummy," the Doctor's manner was calculated to pacify his tone to warn,

"but," with a triumphant glance into the doubting eyes of this first questioner as to his motives regarding the "Bald Eagle," "the fact that Captain Minturn is entering into the plan surely ought to satisfy *you.*"

Was there a suggestion of contemptuous superiority in the Doctor's emphasis on the final word? Dummy, "thick-headed one's" reply; he might even have deimagining as much, was not deceived by his sauvity of manner and had Fowler been less engrossed in his own affairs he might have scented a note of danger in the tected a hidden meaning, the lurking possibility of some venomous sting. "Oh, there's nothin' wrong with the *Captain*; *he's* all right." Dummy could be emphatic as well as another and there was a certain grim satisfaction in the sardonic smile with which he left the room. Not, however, until he had reached the seclusion of his own kitchen, did he add softly to himself: "The *Captain* ain't posin' under no false name, at which I've often wondered, but now I'm beginnin' to see a light." With which rather equivocal remark Dummy's comments ended.

Some weeks later a prominent New York daily, in a somewhat facetious vein, announced the advent of a new mining company, under the following headlines: "Well-known Arizona Mine to Resume. Conservative Management Explains Many Things. If Copper Isn't There, Where Is It?" The article went on to say how the ultra-conservative majority in Wall Street, "which refuses to accept with the prospectus-devouring public the roseate tales from Western mining camps, was rudely shocked the other day, to learn that

a very old mine, which couldn't make expenses at the time of its abandonment some years ago, was about to resume under a new management, having recapitalized for a paltry million, the securities evolved from the magic process to consist of one hundred thousand shares of the par value of ten dollars each. The announcement of this bonanza prospect was put out by one of the news agencies in this form:

"'Tentative plans of the Bald Eagle Mining Company have been received by the banking firm of Fowler & Co., at —— Wall Street, which is just moving its luxurious offices to the —— Building, indicating the reorganiaztion of the said mining company whose stocks will, it is confidently stated, be selling above par within six months after the completion of the big reduction plant, now contemplated, and the installation of more modern machinery.

"'The early development of the mine, as is already well known, was too brilliantly superficial, but it is now believed that, with an adequate equipment extensive work will be justified and a great body of ore opened up for treatment.'

"Arizona mining stocks are attracting much attention these days, and it is understood that the President of one of the big New York banks is interested in the syndicate which has purchased the once-famous mine—his name, at least, has been harnessed in market gossip to the property which is so soon to be taking fortunes out of the ground, and he is quoted as saying (whether in reference to the Bald Eagle or not is hardly clear) that, as if to wreak poetic justice upon those who so

lightly abandoned the property, 'this long deserted hole in the ground will turn out to be a big mine after all.'

"Doctor Fowler, in his office in the —— Building, had any amount of information at his fingers' ends, in reference to the prospects of the mine which has paid nothing for years, 'because of its having been shut down'—a circumstance ascribed to litigation, the exact nature of which is unexplained, 'but the stuff is in it for all that,' and the stock has been put up gradually until yesterday the market quoted by Doctor *Fowler made it ten dollars a share; hence the one million dollar valuation.*" * * * Much of which glowing information was imparted to Travers, en route for Tucson by a whilom schoolmate, named Beverly, who had joined Fowler's rapidly growing party somewhere west of Chicago.

Beverly, at that time a politician in embyro, had not yet discovered the inclination of his own ambitions which, however, were wavering with the constancy of the magnetic needle toward a guiding star called Fame. Already, indeed, he felt the attractive influences of that national reputation which, in some sort, he meant to achieve; he rather thought that he fancied the altruistic pose of an impecunious statesman crowned with a wealth of honors and yet—one never ever knew; there was not a little public esteem to be derived along philanthropic lines, at least where was the harm in amassing a fortune as a mere side issue? And Beverly, reasoning thus, had been "caught in the snare of the Fowler," as Travers put it, when Treverin expressed, some-

what tentatively, his private doubts of the astute Doctor to that budding diplomat.

"No use, Jack," finished Travers, finally, "I couldn't warn Clarence Beverly if I tried; he's such an ass that he'd want me to prove my assertions, and we haven't any documentary evidence to show against this 'blooming mining scheme,' as his lordship calls it. Too bad, I agree; for I'm morally sure you're right, and I feel a sneaking sympathy for that fiery little Shotwell from Illinois—irascible and peppery, he may be, but honest, I'll be bound, and investing his last red, if I'm not mistaken."

"It would be amusing if it were not too pitiful to see the sphinx-like wisdom with which they handle those samples of ore. Where they came from heaven only knows, but I'd be willing to wager a good deal that Bald Eagle has not produced anything so rich for years." With which final admonition Treverin relieved his conscience of a responsibility that was hardly his affair after all, he told himself.

Nevertheless he could not get free of a keen interest in the fate of the party which left their train at —— Junction where it was met by a string of heterogenious conveyances among which an antiquated carry-all attracted Treverin's eye to its driver, who seemed particularly eager for a word with Fowler and, as that worthy, after having safely bestowed his many guests, stood watching the departure of the last stage load, his attention, about to be directed to his own mount, was sharply recalled to the man at his elbow.

"Well, what now, Dummy?" he demanded, with some impatience.

"Oh, nothin', only," with a nonchalent indifference calculated to match the Doctor's very own, "the Captain had a urgent telegram callin' him North, and he left last night, kind of sudden."

Folwer's hasty exclamation of startled surprise was not lost upon his informant, whose coolness seemed to keep pace with the Doctor's excitement. "D—— you, Dummy, you're joking—we're ruined without Minturn, and you know it; tell me quick, man, what's your game."

"No game at all; the telegram come yesterday afternoon (it was in his waste-basket this mornin') an' he went at onct, leavin' this here note fer you; also instructions that all should be runin' smooth up yonder against your arrival." And the man who had been addressed as Dummy thrust under Fowler's nose a sealed envelope and an open telegram, whose fragmentary sentences he underscored, grotesquely, with the solitary finger of a maimed right hand, while he read aloud with laborious clearness: "Carroll and maid arrived at Ash Fork on July ——, via the Santa Fe. Couldn't help it; she would surprise you; Henry ill, or I might have come also. Wiser not to let her know I telegraphed you. Exceedingly anxious until I hear that all is well and I'm forgiven.—Anne Minturn Carroll."

"Jest like a woman, ain't it," commented Dummy, after having rolled out, with a triumphant flourish of r's, a name that sounded perilously like Karl—"sech a durned lot of expensive words; but the Captain looked powerful worried—you bet—uneasy about hold-

ups, I guess. He wouldn't trust no messenger, neither, though I offered my services, since I'm expectin' to go North myself fer a little spell as soon as this here stage play's over."

With which parting thrust Dummy began to stow away in the body of the carry-all such stray pieces of luggage as had been left behind while Fowler, standing on the deserted platform (beneath that open car window through which much of the foregoing conversation had been borne, by some strange chance, to Treverin's ears), set himself to work out the problem presented through a note which had changed his plans, to say the least, and when the train pulled slowly out, a moment later, he was still there, savagely biting his lower lip and frowning heavily.

CHAPTER VII.

"A rosebud set with little wilful thorns."—*Tennyson.*

"FORSAKEN of God and maligned by man," it is small wonder that Ash Fork has been but slow to realize itself. Its very name, hinting at spent fires and that pronged instrument associated so decidedly with Mephistophelian symbolism, is suggestive to the average mind of a sinister origin, and many witticisms have been made at its expense—one of the cruelest, to the effect that, from whatever direction it may be approached, one must invariably enter the town on a down-grade and to get out of "such a hole" he must needs make a slow and toilsome journey up hill; while a certain traveler from the East, enamored of the beauties of California, had been known to aver that Ash Fork, like purgatory, was an unpleasant stopping-place between the interesting monotony of God's country and the untasted joys of a paradise beyond. So it has come to pass that Ash Fork, drifting for years through a slouching existence, with no inspiration to improve upon those few definite gifts bestowed upon it by a bounteous Nature has grown gradually to concur in the generally expressed opinion of those who regard "that wretched place where one sometimes has to wait," as the abomination of desolation."

But there may come a day when some discerning person will discover that Ash Fork has "atmosphere," that there is a certain fascination in the wide freedom of its undulating landscape, a rugged dignity in those desolate plains that stretch away through a vast, clear envelope of rarified ether to where bald cones of volcanic cinder are thrown in broad, bold masses against a horizon whose deceptive nearness gives promise of limitless spaces beyond. Then it will be remembered that this place, although lower than Flagstaff, can yet boast of an altitude of over five thousand feet; that here, the palpitant heat of a brief high noon gives place to long, cool twilight hours when the sighing breath of an evening breeze makes plaint that an ardent sun has gone to the West, where darkling shadows play, and the stars come to watch for the flush of dawn and the nightbird's song floats through dry, clear air, where no danger of cold ever lurks unseen, and Ash Fork will come into its own.

No such transformation, however, had taken place on a certain July day when a west-bound express, having slowed down at the station, deposited on the platform a rather curious collection of human freight and its accompanying quota of ill-assorted luggage, conspicuous among which were several sizes of trunks, plainly marked and docketed as hailing from Washington, D. C., that might perhaps have given rise to somewhat interesting speculation as to the characteristics of their owners, had not the attention been drawn away to a spirited conversation taking place between a learned-looking gentleman with a pince-nez and a bright-faced girl of sixteen or thereabout.

"Really, Professor, there is absolutely no necessity for inquiring. I'm quite sure there can't be any telegram for *me*. You know I'm to be a surprise, father isn't even aware that we're coming, and the important thing is to find out about the trains going South."

"But, Miss Carroll, there is no train going South—you must have been misinformed; I've just inquired, and"—— the elderly gentleman with the scholarly brow, hesitated—perplexed.

"No train going South? You *must* be mistaken, Doctor Wendling; we've probably missed the last one out to-day and may have to spend the night at some hotel here. Hadn't you better find out about where one is, and call a cab to take us there? But first, please, ask for a time-table, so we may be sure to get off without fail to-morrow, for I can hardly wait to see father."

Half-child, half-woman, Carroll Minturn had already begun to realize that the mind of a man of science may need practical direction, and hence she had taken to managing the distrait Wendling with a sweet firmness which was entirely feminine and appealed to the learned Doctor as altogether charming in one who listened with such wrapt attention to his earnest monologues on the ethnological significance of the Hopis, as a type. Indeed, such a keen interest in racial origins seemed quite wonderful in one so young and the gentle professor, unversed in the ways of the sex, began to feel a scientific pleasure in "the development of the child's mind," little dreaming that behind her sympathetic questions there lurked a mighty weariness such as only youth may feel in the presence of an antiquary. And

Carroll, having an immense respect for this distinguished personage, who had been chosen by a famous institution as the most conservative of archæological investigators, to conduct an expedition into Arizona, imbued also with a fine sense of the importance of being one, as it were, of this learned band of explorers which was to penetrate the mysteries of the ages—Carroll would have considered it rude not to respond to the pet prejudices of this kind-hearted traveling companion whom Aunt Anne had pressed into service as a chaperone. Her eager desire, therefore, to make Professor Wendling happy was as wholly sincere, if less spontaneous, as that more vital enthusiasm with which she greeted the swift flashes of a vivid present-day life that came to her in fleeting glimpses as they sped westward.

How welcome was her first sight of a real cow-boy dashing over the plain, leaving flying dust-clouds in his wake, and the Indians—ah, they were her first disappointment. Picturesque but far less appealing than the savage warriors of her dreams, whose tragic gloom was impenetrable, their fiery spirits unquenched, these smiling sellers of pottery, who beseiged the platforms and car windows at every stopping place, seemed only bent, like all the rest of a commonplace world, upon earning a prosaic if honest penny. She was comforted, however, when Doctor Wendling related the history of the red man's last desperate struggle against advancing civilization, in the South; of far-famed Apache strongholds from which there had issued war-like bands of fierce marauders to prey upon the rich freighters of

those early days when twenty-mule team wagons bearing huge cargoes of merchandise and of ore tempted the Indians hardly less than the gayly bedecked quadrupeds themselves, whose bizarre trimmings did not stop with the brass bells of their trappings, but extended to bodies and tails which were roached and clipped in so fantastic and grotesque a fashion as to excite envy even in a savage breast. She laughed when he told her of those final wild raids upon the snorting "steam horse" which certain bold Apaches had essayed to pull from its "iron trail" with rawhide riatas, as one ropes a steer, of how the powerful engines, spurning a noose had taught them how to fear an unseen power, for "had not the lasso proved the doom of such as had attacked this devil-wagon?"

In their mutual appreciation of one another's enthusiasms, the man who represented a prehistoric past and the girl who stood for an epoch-making future had come to be fast friends, and Doctor Wendling turned to do her bidding with a ready acquiescence that was, perhaps, an unconscious tribute to the silent strength of practical forces as opposed to the possible impotence of theoretic abstractions, while the idea began slowly to dawn upon Carroll that one might experience some difficulty in "calling a cab" at Ash Fork, that such a vehicle might, in fact, prove to be rather an incongruous note on this landscape of billowing browns; grave doubts, moreover, as to the existence here of such a place as had thus far been associated in one's mind with the word hotel, were pressing upon her with sharp insistence when Doctor Wendling returned.

"They tell me that the railroad of which you have heard is not yet finished; that until it is, the only way to reach Phœnix is by stage, although from there on traveling will be more comfortable. I am afraid you should have come by the Southern route, but now we shall have to do the best that we can, and, in the meantime, do you not think it would be well for me to telegraph your father?"

"Telegraph father? No, indeed; that would spoil my surprise. What fun to go by stage! Besides, Halcyon Valley is farther North than you think, because, when the new railroad is finished, the run from Ash Fork to our home will be shorter than that between New York and Washington; father has said so." She finished with a triumphant finality that was almost convincing.

"But," the Doctor hesitated, "*we* are going by slow stages through out-of-the-way places, taking in Montezuma's Well and certain prehistoric ruins on our journey South. We may, in fact, decide to wait for cooler weather before undertaking excavation work at Casa Grande, and"——

"But we shan't be in the way, Professor, and *I* do not mind going slowly; please take us, and I promise to be most obedient; I *can* be good; Marie will testify (I have no other witness), that I am easy to manage when the necessity of the occasion demands it, *n'est pas* Marie?" and she turned impulsively in mock appeal to a French maid, who had been standing guard over the hand-baggage with the air of one who expected

at any moment to be called upon to risk her life in its defense.

"But, yes, Mees Carroll," corroborated Marie, who had applied herself with remarkable assiduity to acquiring the "speech Americain," since hearing her young mistress tell Aunt Anne that she, Carroll, could not be expected to learn the language of every new servant employed in the house, which remark had been made apropos of one of Aunt Anne's hobbies with no reference to the French maid or her native tongue and belongs to "another story" that need not be repeated here.

"It is not an indisposition on my part to have you with us, Miss Carroll. Your company is"—the Doctor floundered hopelessly for a word properly tempered with dignity and gallantry, "is a most edifying pleasure, but"——

Carroll, dimpling adorably at a compliment as unexpected as it was naïve, interrupted him with: "That's dear Aunt Anne's pet excuse but, as I tell *her*, father knows *me* too well to hold any one else accountable. And so it's settled we're going; and now, *when* does the stage leave?"

Her infectuous energy carried more deliberate minds by storm, and before he quite realized it, Doctor Wendling had made arrangements for such an addition to his party as would have seemed appalling a month ago, and within half an hour he and Carroll were eating together, companionably, at a democratic lunch-counter, about which were gathered all sorts and conditions of men, while Marie, at the extreme right, nibbled daintily

but abstractedly, hugging closely all the while a brown portmanteau which had never left her hand, and glancing now and again toward a genial-looking "garcon-vache" as she denominated the individual at her left, who was gulping coffee in horrifying quantities, at the same time shoveling pie into his mouth with a rapidity that inspired terror and a sustained gusto which appeared to be hardly less remarkable than it was audible.

With respect to that same brown portmanteau, however, it had become necessary for Carroll to confide to Doctor Wendling Marie's reasons for never allowing it out of her sight in order that he, too, being in the friendly conspiracy, might connive with them both at its preservation from the hands of officious porters and eager baggage men. In its capacious pockets it appeared that the earnings of fifteen frugal years had been stowed away, artfully concealed between the innocent looking folds of sundry handkerchiefs or deftly rolled in that time-honored institution of the thrifty French peasant, the saving "bas d'or," for somewhere, Marie had heard of vast benefits to be reaped by those who "eenvest" in mines, and it had seemed to her not at all a bad idea to have in one's hand, for the first opportunity that might present itself in the enchanted land to which they were going, that nest-egg which had lain safely thus far in a bank, according to Uncle Harry's advice (and so Marie had withdrawn her little fortune and was bearing it with her, in anticipation of some new Eldorado, anxiously, cautiously, as the self-appointed guardian of vague potentialities.

CHAPTER VIII.

> In such a night
> Did Thisby fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
> And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
> And ran dismay'd away.

MIDSUMMER in Halcyon Valley is but an aftermath of Spring. Gradually, almost imperceptibly, since the coming of life-giving showers, has the transformation been going on—softening rugged mountain ranges with the changing greens of myriad grasses and gently veiling the stern barrenness of tawny hillsides with the tender verdure and the brilliant hues of countless wild-flowers—but it is, all in a moment, that one realizes (through the smiling radiance of a blooming desert) that the great awakening has come.

To John Treverin, viewing for the first time, with the eyes of an outsider, the far reaches of this land of his nativity, the slow progress northward had been a succession of revelations through which he had been given ample opportunity to note such changes as the four years of his absence had wrought. And yet it was not the changes themselves which impressed him, but rather that, in their potential significance, he felt the quickening power of possible emanations; giving promise, even as had the silent brooding of the sterile wilderness of a future rich in fruition.

It was the first year of that great drought which, sweeping over Arizona in the early nineties, burned first the southern ranges and, two years later, wrought its work of devastation in the North. But Halcyon Valley, as yet exempt from that unyielding dryness which proved so fatal to the native grasses, was supporting with bounteous hospitality, in the glades and on the slopes of its mineral bearing hills, flocks of sheep that had been driven from as far South as the Sonoran border line to feed upon the rich forage grasses that grow so quickly to maturity in the rainy season when the last vestiges of the alfilaria, which constitutes much of loveliness of the wild pea-vine, most nutritious and toothsome of morsels to bleating epicureans, have given place to a less inviting but not unwholesome browse consisting of the leaves of the mesquite, the foliage of the manzanita and the berries of the chincapin.

And Treverin, riding for hours with the lonely sheepherders, caught glimpses of the diversified interests of the Territory, learned something of the breadth of its development, of the height of its ambitions. Yonder, he was informed by a certain taciturn shepherd with whom he had ridden for well-nigh the half of a long day, was a noble ram whose geneology might be traced back to Asiatic ancestors that had fed upon the plains of Chaldea under the guardianship of those wise men of old who, while watching their flocks by night, had pondered so many things in their hearts. There, resting by night and feeding by day, the sheep had first been brought to that high state of perfection which

made it seem of sufficient value for importation into Europe where the Merino of French and Spanish fame had developed the highest type then known to the world. The strengthening of the breed had been maintained through careful herding from mountain to valley in winter and back to the rich ranges of the Pyrenees for the summer months, and even the great Napoleon had deigned to interest himself in the destiny of sheep. Later, still retaining all that was best of the primitive methods of those ancient Chaldean astronomers, the famous strains of Cotswold and Southdown had been produced and then, through the grafting of these old world methods upon new world ideas, under climatic conditions that were almost perfect, had been evolved that pedigreed American Merino which Treverin was assured, could not be outclassed by the best blood of "Australian improved."

And thus, on every side, did Treverin realize the merging of world-old experience with modern science. Here were great stretches of alfalfa purpling in the sunlight; there, fields of yellowing grain, green orchards of almonds and of apricots, set on the edge of a desert—sometimes in its very midst—a desert through which, for distances of several miles some modern canal might traverse the bed of an ancient Aztec ditch, cut to a width of twenty feet, constructed indeed from the solid rock by a people whose life drama had been played out in a period of antiquity so remote that its history is but the dim wraith of a legend.

As for the railroad, that most important factor in

modern human affairs through whose evolution might be traced many of the benefits and more of the problems of present-day civilization—the sinuous pathway of its shining rails was the dominant fact in the landscape; its roadbed which had girdled mountains, been blasted through cliffs and stretched across canyons, represented more than a pretty piece of engineering skill; it seemed rather the final link in a chain that was to bind the faith of the ages with the hope of the century.

One of the definite achievements that must be counted to the credit of the man he had come to seek, Treverin knew that the work now nearing completion had not been conceived in that spirit of self-aggrandizement which has inspired many a dreamer to conquer in the realms of traffic. He imagined that, in the life scheme of Richard Wood, it represented little more than a side issue which had been met with the ever victorious persistence that characterized his simplest movements. And yet Wood was not, he believed, the man to ascribe his accomplished labor to disinterested motives.

With nothing baffling or enigmatical in his temperament, with little of the inscrutable in his personality, he possessed chiefly the astuteness of the wise man who is above all else honest with himself. If his genius was constructive in its influence it was not because of a self-conscious effort to benefit the masses but rather through his frankly expressed conviction that the most far-sighted success is an inclusive prosperity which carries upward the fortunes of the majority and, therefore, that very grasp of a situation which had helped him to a quick recognition of the fact that a north and

south road would be a means of opening up for the general good large and valuable sections of undeveloped country, made him none the less slow in his perception of the immense advantage to be reaped therefrom by his own particular interests.

An ever broadening sense of perspective enabled Treverin to realize the proportionate value of Richard Wood more fully, perhaps, through his work, than could have been possible in any other way, and yet the boy who had made his plans without taking into account the probability of delay could hardly have chosen this by-path of psychological speculation forced upon him by the telegram which he had found awaiting him at Tucson.

Containing as it did the unlooked-for information that Wood had been abroad, was expected within the month, and would unquestionably arrive by the North- had chosen—that of proceeding northward without delay, in the hope of meeting Wood immediately upon his ern route, it had left to Treverin the course which he return to the erritory—or the alternative of accepting the earnest invitation of young Waldergrave to come with their party up into the cool altitudes of the Santa Cruz or Rillito ranges, the Honorable Lionel was not quite sure which, over whose summits welcome clouds were said to hover and where fresh southwest winds had been promised as a relief -from -the "blawsted plains" where it was so "beastly hot."

During their brief acquaintance, the young Briton had conceived for Treverin a liking that bordered on enthusiasm. It had found expression through his char-

acterization of the American as "an awfully jolly good sort," a remark called forth by no especial manifestation of gayety on Treverin's part, but rather because of their mutual capacity for maintaining interesting silences which, as his own especial fort, the Englishman had been wont to regard in the light of a gift, distinctly national, and vouchsafed to few beyond the confines of that insular environment whose reposeful dignity has held its own through the changing phases of more ephemeral civilizations. And to the general cordiality of this urgent invitation there was the added warmth of a more particular welcome awaiting Treverin at Tucson from the elder Waldergrave, whose comfortable box up in the hills had been placed at the disposal of the Honorable Lionel and his friends for the shooting, later on. In the meantime, they were assured of pretty fair sport in an angler's paradise and the hospitality of a roomy ranch house on the slope of the mountain where, on the borders of a frontier, now rapidly vanishing, surrounded by trophies gathered from many lands, the scion of a sturdy stock dispensed good cheer after the fashion of Merrie England when the world was young, in an atmosphere which had absorbed harmonious elements from a storied past as readily as it had caught the varied respiration of an abounding future.

The very room in which the plans for a long holiday had been discussed, on the evening of their arrival, preserved the significance of a microcism wherein the tawny skin of a royal Bengal tiger was offset by the lustrous pelt of a mountain lion as Nature, unsubdued

in the Orient viewed the untamed wildness of an occident wherein the crude symbolism of Navajo blanket matched the emblematic mysticism of Eastern prayer rug. One lost one's sense of intrinsic values in the huge hall whose lofty rafters and dark beamed ceiling could be one moment ablaze with the modern brilliance of countless electric bulbs, the next, in the subdued radiance of swinging lamps of rare old bronze and then at length reduced to the shadowy flicker of firelight glow which wrought fantastic effects among the antique armor in the corners and the defensive antlers on the walls. Mingling curiously this flotsam and jetsam from the rich argosies of Time had drifted together in a picturesque confusion that suggested no contention for superiority, nor did any object, vying with its neighbor, hint at a question of relative worth.

A fitting background, it had seemed to Treverin for the lineal descendant of an ancient earldom in whose attractive personality one "sensed" somehow a fine blending of the complex traditions of older civilizations with the definitive ambitions of a younger race. The elder Waldergrave seemed to have shed the superficial mannerisms that still characterized his younger brother as naturally as he had discarded the honorary titles that had come to him by birth, and yet voluntarily divested as he was of the conventional dignity of his rank, he seemed a living exponent of the fact that native virility may be recovered in the individual chiefly because of its having been typical of his race.

To Treverin, fresh from the limitations of college life, there had been a certain agreeable charm, a subtle

flavor of cosmopolitanism in the society of his three traveling companions and the promised pleasure of continued intercourse with this seasoned man of the world, whose force seemed the result of a widely diffused experience that had simmered down to the strength of thought, made him loth to surrender the joys of the dilletante for that path of definite duty which had been the object of his journey.

Again to-night, however, he felt the power of those early influences that had lain at the root of his first inspiration: for it had been an inspiration, he told himself, as definitely translucent as the pale stars, whose flashing light so brilliantly remote seemed nearer and clearer in this crystal transparency of desert air.

He had been riding alone since sundown, having rested through the heated hours of a long afternoon in the hope of covering many weary miles before the coming of another dawn. At the top of a hill he paused, surveying the broad, cooling area of moon-lit desert over which his path wound circuitously before him. To the right great dark masses of mountains were sharply outlined against a cloudless sky: on the left undulating waves of sandy plain stretched through broad spaces westward. No sound disturbed the clear stillness of the night, the attenuated shadows of giant sahuaros stretched gaunt and motionless across his way—not even the lithe grace of a paloverde stirred in the appalling silence of the breathless moment, and yet, suddenly, his waiting horse pricked up his ears.

An instant later the sharp report of a pistol rang out upon the quiet air and Treverin, turning abruptly to

the left, saw the quick recurrence of flashes that registered themselves in rapid succession about a dark splotch of confused shadows, whose blurred outlines were scarcely distinguishable in the dim distance.

That there had been an attack upon the belated stage he surmised, but as to the character of its assailants he dared not hazard a guess until faintly he caught the echo of wild shouting and the significance of a savage yell was borne in upon his understanding. The possibility of an Indian attack in this place and at this date seemed absurd to one familiar with the tribal histories of the Territory, and yet remembering the conditions that still prevailed among certain turbulent remnants of a savage race just beyond the international boundery line, and recalling vague reports of an attack upon a stage-load of passengers within recent years by a stray band of Apaches, running amuck, who had escaped the fate of the ill-starred Geronimo, he almost feared what seemed beyond the power of belief.

Lurid tales of the 'sixties flashed through his brain, horrible accounts of bloody massacres perpetrated in the early 'seventies: the history of thrilling encounters between well-armed troopers and wild young braves in the last stern struggle of a stalwart race for its tribal traditions, its right to maintain that savage independence where existence lay. Experiences sad and tragic rushed upon his mind, told by famous Indian fighters of the past decade—men who had eaten at his father's board—who had slept and fought beneath these friendly stars, in the days when a sheltering tent overhead was a thing as rare and far less missed, they had said,

than the unaccustomed sight of a woman's face. And the fighting blood of a combative breed raged fiercely within him at the fearsome thought of an onslaught of the savage upon helplessness.

To spur his horse to its utmost speed for a maddening race through a cloud of dust, that might have been raised by a dozen men, was the impulse of a moment, but it bore him down to a scattering group, on the sandy plain, that circled around a stranded stage. The challenging question of friend or foe had elicited a satisfactory response and he was soon apprised of a few important details concerning the attack which had been made, it appeared, by several Indians, who must have received the information somewhere that the stage was expected to convey certain heavy consignments of gold from the—country. They had lain in wait for the purpose of capturing the rich booty and the driver, who was relating his experiences when Treverin arrived upon the scene of action, seemed to be of the opinion that a white man in the disguise of a red-skin had planned and directed the hold-up. "For," he added skeptically, "no durned Injun could have been so slick at carryin' off the gold with not a life thrown in and guns playin' lively jest fer fun. I was drivin' along as cam as June, when a red-ski jumps out from behind that rock and pinting a pistol straight at me heart, mutters, "Throw off the strong box, the Injuns kill." Devil a bit, me friends, says I, feelin' my gun most comfortin' near; 'nothin' doing here in the bankin' way.'

"Then before I knows it owld Satan gets loose and four of his imps are dancin' aroun' blinkin' their guns

and eyein' me fierce with powerful hands at the horses' heads, while the fifth was fer searchin' the coach clean through. Twixt passengers' screams and them savages' yells and the voice of the leader givin' commands, I well-nigh lost the sense of the scene and failed to notice the moment whin me horses got free.

"Yes, them shots was fired straight out in the air jest fer a show, an' they all rides off, but the leader still was lingerin' roun' and cursin' low, fer 'where in the devil's name,' says he, 'is that big gold bar as was comin' down from old Rajah Mine by this stage, as I heared." He stood thinkin' awhile scratchin' his head and eyein' me cowld, fer he hadn't give me back my gun. Then he laughed as though he'd remembered some, an' 'I guess,' says he, "that it must have been with them women that run, an' they've got it somewhere's in that durned little bag. I'll bet my life they hev', sez he.

Hereupon the loquacious driver, who had been the center of interest to a group of some half dozen passengers, was interrupted by an elderly gentleman, who demanded frantically to know in what direction they had gone.

"If you mean the Injuns, sor, I'm jest after tellin' ye as how five of 'em made a bee line fer the South, an' the leader (I c'd swear *he* was no Injun) struck out North. I spose they've got horses hid out yonder 'mongst the rocks, as there wasn't more than enough shadows aroun' *here* to conceal a few men sech a night as this."

"But the young lady and her maid," gasped the tall

gentleman, "tell me, driver, where have they gone? No one has seen them since we all got out of the coach to investigate the cause of this disturbance."

The mystified driver stared stupidly for a moment with bulging eyes into the anxious face of his distraught passenger and then a light seemed to dawn in his own.

"Holy Mother," he exclaimed excitedly, "it must have been thim the war whoopin' white man in a blanket was speakin' about, but durned if I see his meanin' until this minute."

"What shall we do?" cried Doctor Wendling in very genuine distress. "She was but a child, in my care and—"

"Can I be of service?" asked Treverin quietly. "My horse is in pretty good trim, and if you will give me some idea as to direction I may be able to overtake them more quickly than the rest of you."

The driver, pointing toward the Northeast, in a few rapid words explained where he had last seen the vanishing figure of the masked highwayman, and Treverin, turning his horse's head, had soon put a wide distance between himself and the little group of excited passengers who were following more slowly on foot.

In the white light of a full moon he could not have failed to distinguish the slightest shifting of a moving shadow, and yet the broad level of the desert lay before him, a motionless sea of gleaming silver, showing upon its shimmering surface not any sign of life. Treverin doubted not that his own figure and that of the horse would afford an easy mark for a lurking foe unless he

had been fortunate enough to hit upon the trail of the pursued and had not yet outdistanced the pursuer in the race. For this piece of good luck, however, he had been forced to trust to chance as no foot-print could have been discovered in a path so unstable.

Scanning his surroundings closely he had begun to ride more warily, stopping now and again to listen for the sound of voices, searching with eager eyes the fantastic shadows cast by ghostly forms of giant cacti that suggested in their weird contortions strange, ghoulish phantoms of the night. At length in the sheen of a stray moonbeam he detected on the sand before him a glimmering thread of gold which proved upon investigation to be nothing less than a small hairpin, and it gave him the instant assurance that he could not now be off their track. Further on the suggestive femininity of a huge ribbon bow left him somehow with a pathetic impression of unbound pig-tails and the appealing terror of a frightened child. Not long afterwards he caught the sense of a low-toned conversation that came to him faintly above the whispering silence of running water, from the direction of a thick clump of cottonwood trees, whose dense shade concealed the deeper blackness of a shallow stream beyond.

"Oh, Marie, why have you made me run—it was cowardly, it is childish—I shall never cease to be ashamed. Besides, we have missed a real stage robbery. How amusing it was with all the passengers so safe!"

"But Madamoiselle, have you not seen zat zey are Indians? Shall zey have ze scalp of Madamoiselle and ze fortune of Marie? It is to run and zen to rest and zen to run again."

"But in what direction shall we run, Marie? There may be more Indians lurking about, who knows? Sh! Taisez-vous, I am sure I heard a sound.

Treverin, who had been waiting in the shadow of a rock planning how he might make his presence known in a way to cause least alarm, saw, as upon a stage, the stealthy approach of a blanketed form creeping from the opposite direction across a moonlit space that lay just beyond the cottonwoods.

"Ah, mon Dieu, it eez un sauvage! Fly, Madamoiselle, fly!"

"Taisez, Marie, I am not afraid." And to Treverin's horror an erect childish figure walked straight forward into the light.

The Indian, if such he were, whose leering countenance, besmeared with paint, showed grotesquely from under a feather head-dress that had gotten ludicrously awry, seemed surprised at the apparition that had suddenly confronted him. For a moment he stood silently before the slip of a girl, whose disheveled hair caught and held the distant splendor of the moon like fine threads of spun gold, and then with a queer little grunt that sounded strangely out of harmony with his savage appearanve he demanded in a deep guttural voice, "Must give gold brick to Apache Sam."

"You have been misinformed, we have no gold brick," replied Carroll, coldly, "but I shall be glad to pay you liberally if you will show us the way to the nearest town."

The artless guile with which she appealed to his cupidity and at the same time challenged any latent

mercy that might lie dormant in his nature was not without its effect upon the red-skin, who hesitated a moment as though debating inwardly whether it were wiser to assume the character of a friend or to maintain the attitude of a foe. His keen eyes, however, which had penetrated the friendly gloom of the cottonwoods, seemed to detect something there which reminded him of what had well- nigh escaped his memory, and pushing past the fearless child he approached the crouching figure of the terror-stricken maid, whose tragic cries seemed to have little effect upon his stolid silence.

"Oh, monsieur le Sauvage," as he attempted to wrench the brown pertemanteu from her frantic grasp, "I assure you I have not ze gold—it ezz but some slips of paper zat I have save all zeze years." And Carroll, running back into the shadows to the support of poor Marie, remembered long afterwards how this strange Indian had replied: "Too thin fer a yarn, my girl; paper savin' don't sound nat'ral, even in a furriner."

In the confusion of the scuffle, however, the possible significance of his unmistakable English did not penetrate her understanding. She was fully aware, however, of his horrible appearance; she was only conscious of the importance of saving the maid and her cherished belongings from the ruthless grip of this outrageous creature.

"How dare you?" she demanded fiercely, standing before him with flashing eyes—a small tempest of indignation—"handle a woman in such a fashion? You *shall* not have the bag nor will you touch its contents."

And with the imperious gesture of an autocrat she seized the unoffending piece of luggage from the relaxed fingers of the maid, and tossing it behind her, faced him like a little fury.

Enraged by this unlooked-for opposition, the burly figure advanced upon her threateningly with uplifted hand and menacing look, and with what fierce intention there was no time to discover, for suddenly he found himself looking into a pair of unflinching eyes somewhat above the level of his own, while a determined voice suggested with cool irony that if the noble Indian had quite finished bullying the women, he might feel equal to tackling a man.

Apache Sam, balked of his purpose, eyed the intruder savagely, but the impatient click of a revolver still courteously concealed from view (which sounded, however suspiciously near) warned him that there might be more to reckon with than this gentlemanly stranger's pleasant personality. Moreover, as his quick hearing had caught the approaching sound of distant voices, he decided not to risk the danger of delay, and drawing from the folds of his guady blanket a pistol, which he aimed directly at the child, he began to back cautiously down the steep embankment.

Carroll, white and startled, following his movements with fascinated eyes, saw him vanish slowly in the deep ravine, watched him swinging out from a gnarled old tree, to which for an instant he had seemed to cling with the thumb and finger of a mutilated hand.

Covering him closely with his own weapon, Treverin had followed, not daring to fire lest the angry ruffian

might wreak a hasty vengeance upon the helpless child, and at length from the very edge of the precipice, blindly he fired into the night: to be answered only by a mocking laugh, as Apache Sam, with a yell of triumph fled away through the murky gloom of the narrow canyon.

Disappointed and chagrined at having been so cleverly outwitted by an astute villian, Treverin began slowly to retrace his steps across the open space to where Carroll and the maid had been left for but a moment in the shadow of the trees. But hardly had he reached what he thought must be the spot where the so-called Apache had first drawn his wretched gun, when the flash of something white caught his wandering eye, and stooping, he picked a scrap of paper from the ground.

It proved to be a clipping from a Tucson paper and he read without difficulty by the brilliant light of the waning moon several marked items relative to certain rich strikes in the old Rajah Mine. They told him little, however, which he had not already learned from the clever speculations of the driver of the stage, and he was on the point of parting with the grimy slip when a word on its margin made him pause and finally pocket it as an interesting find. For—to a train of evidence which memory had started but a fortnight ago in a city hotel—chance had been adding items bit by bit until now in the stillness of the open desert he believed he had found a pretty good clue. But, on the whole, it would be wiser to wait until there should be time to prove his theory and occasion would demand its explanation.

Marie—ministering gently to her little mistress (who had succumbed, it appeared, to the weakness of fainting as soon as the dread Apache Sam had withdrawn from her his exclusive and rather trying attention)—began, as soon as he approached the retreat, to pour out her gratitude for their deliverance in voluble French, but Treverin, boyishly annoyed at having failed in making an interesting capture, was in no mood to be lauded as a hero, and therefore with the purpose of sparing himself any more foolish nonsense he went forward to meet the party of rescuers, forestalling any questions by the brief explanation that his own arrival had been too tardy to admit of his rendering any special aid, and that he believed the young lady had been badly frightened, but was recovering rapidly.

Lingering in the moonlight the little group waited just beyond the shadow of the trees, discussing in low tones the escape of the desperado, while Marie applied restoratives with the practical air of a veteran, and Doctor Wendling wandered back and forth disconsolately, reporting now and then the progress of the patient. She startled him at last by "coming to" with a suddenness that quite took his breath away, and by declaring herself more than able to walk to the stage as soon as her hair had been straightened out.

When this last announcement had been conveyed to them by the relieved Doctor, Treverin, who had been delaying only as long as he thought his horse might be of service, took leave of the band of self-appointed deliverers just as the first faint streaks of a lovely dawn crept along the mountains toward the East, and when,

five minutes later, Carroll joined her fellow-passengers, eager to express her warm appreciation of his prompt relief, they showed her where the figure of a stalwart youth (of whom none could give the name) was outlined sharply on the brightening sky.

CHAPTER IX.

She who knows and knows not that she knows, she is asleep—
wake her.
She who knows and knows that she knows, she is wise—
follow her.

—*Arabian Proverb.*

THE mail was in. Weighted with possible problems, freighted with probable memories, out of the far away East it had come into a bleak little mining camp, and its advent had brought John Treverin again to the vital point of decision. Opportunity was once more face to face with responsibility and the question of where allegiance lay was still unanswered.

Richard Wood had handed the letters to him, in silence—a long, thin envelope bearing the name of a New York law firm and several shorter ones, more bulky perhaps as to substance, less definite, no doubt, as to fact, and "the boy" had received them in the usual way, without comment, his only sign of interest a curious little quiver of nostril, a sudden uplift of head, which Wood had learned to recognize as individual signs of suppressed excitement—the scenting as it were of a battle from afar.

It had been almost two years since "the boy" (for Treverin had claimed his old place in the affections of Richard Wood) had returned to Arizona. Slow years of progress in the actual experience of practical min-

ing—years which had given him a more intelligent appreciation of the vast resources of the Territory, years which had brought to him a deeper realization of her very definite needs. Had they left him likewise with first enthusiasms dulled, or was it simply that he had come to regret his hasty surrender of that greater power which might have helped in the realization of dreams that had begun to formulate?

The morning was too full to admit of inward speculation, for Wood had come out to the mine to talk over plans for further development, and therefore, after a hasty perusal of his mail, the younger man had relegated to the background personal matters, which could wait, and had devoted his attention to the business in hand.

After luncheon, however, which they had eaten in the pretty little bungalow that "the boy" now called home, Treverin was seized with a sudden inspiration, and drawing the long envelope from his pocket he tossed it over to Wood.

"I wish you'd read it, Rick," he said. "I believe I need advice." And then he had left his senior for an hour of solitude in the cozy den while he himself went down to the mine.

Richard Wood, seated at "the boy's" desk, drew from the envelope, which somehow didn't seem to fit, a letter which he began in some surprise and continued —not without wonder.

"Dear old Jack" (it read). "It has seemed ages since we last heard from you, and I am longing for one of the minutely descriptive letters which you never

write. The telegram and short billets-doux have been delightful with their quaint other-world-looking postmarks and suggestive phrases. How I envy you the rides through magnificent mountain passes and along the very edges of precipices. I am sure one could find something amusing even in the dear little mining camp which seems not to have aroused your enthusiasm. If only you half realized how we have been prosing along here perhaps you might appreciate the undiscovered romance of your surroundings.

"Of course there was the usual exodus at the appointed season, and everybody is 'in camp' for the summer, but there are the same people and the same dull routine that one has known for years, varied only by a few more bizarre attempts at architecture and our many spectacular efforts to be original. Even the natural beauty of the sea is rather trying, as it only succeeds in emphasizing by invidious comparison the depths of our degeneracy and the height of our folly. I wonder sometimes that it doesn't look us into quietness as the stern frown of the proverbial parent is said to rebuke into calmness the naughty moods of an obstreperous child, but we have no reverence left for real majesty; it is only the artificial display of a mock grandeur that has the power to move us.

"Pray don't accuse me of being pessimistic—cynical women are so unlovely—and seriously, I believe the trouble is that I need a change. I think I can detect through my symptoms the incipient stages of that fell disease which some one has described as a 'wasting consumption of energies,' and before it quite undermines

such constitution as I may possess I should like to try if higher altitudes, beyond the dead levels of existence, might not effect a cure. There is another reason why I should like to get away which—or rather whom—I have never mentioned to you. Now, however, he has succeeded in creating for me the excitement of an altercation with grandad, who, by the way, has grown more difficult to manage every month since your departure. He misses you terribly, although the old dear wouldn't have any one imagine it. I know how to make allowances, however; at least I have flattered myself that I play the part of patient Griselda 'most excellently well.'

"But to return to the objectional topic—he is, let us say (remember, I am not making admissions) a citizen of (but on the whole it would be fairer to leave his country out of the question), who assisted as best man at one of the recent international weddings, and I happened to be maid of honor. It was nothing more than a pleasant little acquaintance *en passant* until I visited Connie in England last summer, where, because of a few tastes in common, it developed into something of a friendship. Consequences are proving rather troublesome, however, as grandad didn't deny him permission to pay his addresses, and Cousin Cornelia has been urging his suit with vehemence, while I am being made to realize everything—including my years.

"Why can't people understand? But so much depends upon the point of view. Grandad thinks marriage is 'the only sensible career for a woman'; Cousin Cornelia, having drawn doleful pictures of your poor

sister in future throes of vain regret, reiterates her well-known American indifference to titles and in the same breath declares that 'a frank, manly fellow, with the historic background of ancient traditions is not to be despised.' And the worst of it is that he's really exceedingly nice—but, to misquote wise old Willie Shakespeare (who, as Connie puts it, 'said a few things awfully well'), some are born for marriage, some achieve marriage and some have marriage thrust upon them. Doesn't Cornelia impress you as belonging to the third class? I've always regarded Cousin James as a sort of impersonal atmosphere of the proprieties—she is most in character as a chaperone, you know—and his creation of the *mise en scene* while she holds the center of the stage is the best part of the play. Surely, Connie, who wears so triumphantly the most desirable title in Europe, might be said to have achieved marriage, while I—well, I am convinced that one shouldn't care to belong in the second class, that one couldn't submit to being included in the third, and as for the first—ah, Jack, that is, as the Poles put it, to 'know the will of God,' and for *that* one sometimes has to wait.

"I wonder, by the way, how grandad would characterize that last sentiment—may heaven defend me from ever inviting his opinion on the subject—and yet you, Jack, are not less intensely practical; but then I happen to know *you* for a dreamer, and to the man who cherishes his own pet vision of a future which the average person does not see, is not even business a matter of sentiment?

"No doubt grandad, too, has had his dreams, only

they have gotten confused with other peoples' and haven't worked out his way. I have caught glimpses of them through mother's diary—you have never seen that, Jack—I found it only a short time ago in an old trunk upstairs. Such a quaint little volume! I wish I could tell you about it, dear, about the delicate handwriting that fills its yellowing pages with the unconscious art of simple narrative; about the fading ink, the faint aroma of lavender and rose leaves.

I imagine, from what mother writes, that grandad must have wanted our father to come into his business. He had no son of his own, you understand, and he believed our father had an innate capacity for success. Father evidently refused—it seemed to be a point of honor—he felt that a man ought to make his own way.

"It would take too long to tell the whole story now; of how shortly after their marriage our father decided to go West; of how mother remained in New York, where I was born; of how, later, father came to take her to the dear little home away up somewhere in glorious mountains that overlooked a lovely valley in central Arizona; of how I was left to the tender mercies of Cousin Cornelia until the building of the railroad should have made the journey less difficult for me.

"Mother herself writes delightfully of the long journey over the plains; tenderly, of her homesick longing for me; affectionately, of you; and enthusiastically of your friend, Richard Wood. But you shall read it yourself, some day, Jack. Through it all one gains somehow such large impressions of life—so many things are explained, and I find myself wondering if, in view

of the past, there isn't a chance that you and grandfather might work together. It seems to me that things might have been managed more wisely, that there must be a way to a better understanding if only each of you could make some concessions to the ideas of the other. But I have written more voluminously than I dare to realize. I shall not count the pages and neither must you. In the noncommittal language of my childish apology, 'if Barbara were forgiven this time *perhaps* she might not do it again.' At any rate, regenerate or unregenerate, she is always

"Affectionately your sister,

"Barbara Elizabeth Treverin."

Surprised into an interest that deepened as he read, Richard Wood had come to the end of the letter before it occurred to him that there must have been some mistake, that the boy was much too fine of feeling to have submitted to the scrutiny of other eyes than those for which it was intended—for any reason whatsoever—a letter so delicately intimate and personal. Of this he felt convinced even before a closer inspection of the long envelope had revealed to him its legitimate contents, which proved to be a brief note from Treverin's lawyers, urging his consent to the sale of the Queen Elizabeth. The mine, they thought, was devouring more than its share of the small income which had come to him through his mother, and, as an offer that appealed to them as exceptionally good, had just been received, they strongly advised his surrender of the property.

This, Richard Wood did not doubt, was the subject

upon which John had sought his advice. As for the other letter, whose contents had been so unrighteously absorbed—there was always the remote possibility that a man might forget what he had no business to know—Richard Wood smiled at his own sophistry. At any rate he decided to consign the subject to burial in the depths of his consciousness, and to be kind enough to "the boy" to spare him the knowledge of that accidental betrayal of confidence for which no doubt he would feel a very genuine regret.

Fortune seemed to favor the idea, for Richard Wood discovered upon the table, with a bundle of circulars, that had arrived in the morning's mail, an envelope addressed apparently by the same hand. It bore the post-mark of a summer colony which was attaining unpleasant notoriety on two continents, and a date that left no question as to its having been at one time the natural mate of the letter whose lost pages could be so easily restored, whose straying sentences had been so successfully buried.

This, then, was "the boy's" sister.

The eyes of Richard Wood were upon a miniature that must have ocupied its present position on the desk for a long time. The mind of Richard Wood sought among certain unforgotten phrases for the key to an elusive individuality that had escaped him, somehow, in the conventional perfection of detail which created the atmosphere of the picture. Through it the artist had succeeded in conveying an exquisite impression of beautiful womanhood. There was dignity of conception in the quiescent grace of sloping shoulders, and

the setting of a queenly head maintained the touch of high bred repose but it was only the wonderful brown hair in which the painter had caught a subtle gleam of copper and gold with a hint here and there of steel blue lights—that seemed gloriously alive. The portrait had "the boy's" grave mouth, with its alluring suggestion of a hidden capacity for humor, but a smile in the eyes had veiled their depths like the sun on summer seas.

By what strange chance had he failed to meet this woman, of whom he had heard so much, of whom, until today, he had known so little? He remembered now that she was frequently abroad, that she had never been in town when he had happened to be there.

Believing her to be essentially of her own world, he had not been conscious of personal deprivation; he had wondered, rather, at her vital significance in "the boy's" life, had feared, sometimes, her unquestioned influence upon "the boy's" mind. But he saw her, now, as a link in the chain that must hold "the boy" to his duty.

CHAPTER X.

"Talent does what it can: genius what it must."

"WELL, Rick, what do you think of the advice of Grandis & Grandis?" It was the voice of Treverin that broke in upon the quietness of the room.

And Richard Wood, handing back the long thin envelope to its owner, merely asked, "Do you think you can afford to keep the mine?"

Treverin looked surprised, and then he also temporized with a question that was almost indignant in its protest. "Was it not you who advised so strongly against its sale less than two years ago?"

"Since that time, however, conditions have changed." Richard Wood spoke with quiet firmness.

"Are you referring to the break with my grandfather?" "The boy" was suddenly on the defensive, ready to take up the gauntlet, if criticism had been implied; not sorry at the prospect of a fight; glad, it seemed, of the chance to argue out a vexing problem.

"I was stating a patent fact." Richard Wood ignored the opportunity for argument.

"A fact, however, that can have nothing to do with existing circumstances." "The boy" was cooler now in his conscious grasp of unanswerable finalities.

"Conditions in the past had nothing to do with my

former convictions and existing circumstances might have a very decided bearing upon my advice in the present." There was not a hint of reproof in the tone and yet Treverin recognized instantly its note of warning. It made him realize suddenly that here was not a man who would volunteer counsel; it helped him to remember that Richard Wood had not at any time expressed an opinion upon the subject of his difference with his grandfather. And, therefore, with a frank apology for his own scant courtesy, "the boy" went on, with more control.

"Conditions, have, as you say, changed; but I do not yet see how that could have been prevented unless I had been willing to give up this mine. It was my father's pet project; upon which the best energies of his life had been expended—what else could one have done, Rick?"

Treverin spoke quietly, now, with less assurance—as one who finds himself in darkness before he has come to acknowledge the absence of light.

"Are you quite sure that your father would have approved of this separation?" Richard Wood used the probe with the fine tenderness of the searcher after truth.

"You are probably not aware that my father himself was called upon, at one time, to make just such a choice, and"—"the boy's" pause was impressive—"he decided exactly as I have done."

"Have you ever thought," Richard Wood chose his words with careful deliberation, "that your father possibly realized the mistake of his radical position;

that he may, indeed, have trusted much to time and to you for the adjustment of this unfortunate difference; that he might, in fact, have wished to put it in your power to make some reparation?''

''You think, then, that I could have avoided this issue?''

''I believe firmly, from what you have told me of that final conversation, that your grandfather would not have forced it.''

''He had determined, however, that I should become identified with his interests.''

''And why should you not have done so?''

''The boy's'' look of amazed incredulity was not lost upon Richard Wood, who waited, however, for the cold dignity of his reply. ''Because I believed that my first duty was to my father, because I was unwilling to surrender my allegiance to the West.''

''Loyalty has never demanded failure as its due, and the faithfulness with which a man faces defeat is not proof, in itself, that his choice has been the right one.''

''You would seem to doubt my ability to succeed.'' There was a note of disappointment in ''the boy's'' voice, a shade of something like bitterness.''

''I should hardly put it that way.'' The sympathetic tone of the friend had at length given place to the cool, even reflection of the man of affairs. ''But the idea of success as 'a series of correct decisions' rather appeals to me. It implies the importance of starting well.''

''Is there no virtue in beginning at the bottom?'' There was irony in the question—clearly, ''the boy'' was hurt.

"Not when a man has been given his chance higher up. The object of climbing is to arrive where breadth of view inspires development. Unless"—— Richard Wood smiled whimsically, "one finds pleasure and profit in the athletic art."

"To be perfectly plain, Rick, you are inclined to think me a fool, and"——the firm lips twitched slightly Wood caught their brave effort at humor, their courageous hint of a smile. "I'm far from sure that you're wrong."

"Not that, dear boy." The grip of his hand on Treverin's shoulder, the light of affection in his eye, spoke a man's understanding of a man. "There are few of us who are always wise, and not many, I fear, could be found as sincere. I have sometimes wondered," he went on, reflectively, "if the measure of a man's capacity is not, after all, his ability to see and profit by his own mistakes. We all make them, more or less, and it is only prompt discovery and swift retrieval that can rob a mistake of its power to harm."

"And it is so much easier to find truth in the abstract than to acknowledge it in the concrete. There is my father's ambition to make of the Queen Elizabeth a big mine, and"——

"Your own inability to accomplish that result for his sake or for your own without capital," finished Wood, decisively.

"I had counted on the chance of gaining financial power, through my own efforts, in time. Have not others done as much?" The question was significant; the

tone was again combative, and to Richard Wood there seemed a need for surrender without reserve.

"Strength rarely comes through a fatal error in judgment, and the deliberate closing of a definite avenue of present opportunity is a poor augur of future success along indefinite channels."

"Which is just another way of advising me to let go of the mine, to abandon, for the present, whatever it represents of my father's dreams and my own and to return East for the purpose of putting my nose to that grindstone which my grandfather has so generously offered for the furtherance of his own ambitions." There was sarcasm in the tone and a lingering dread of yielding, but relief had crept into the eyes and the clearer light of conviction.

"I think you are on the right track, at last," said Richard Wood, quietly.

"The boy" was packing upstairs.

Richard Wood, in the den below, heard him whistling softly the care-free tunes of childhood, heard him singing now and then some ringing strain of boyhood, and smiled a little sadly as he caught the dawn of manhood in faint prophetic glimpses through the levity of youth.

Presently the gay little snatches of song ceased and a laughing voice demanded.

"Yampa, you rascal, bring it here, bring it here, I say." And then, with sudden annoyance, "Confound his impudence, where has the dog gone?"

Two minutes later the sound of pattering feet on

the stairs was followed by a heavier tread, and a rough and tumble descent ended in a lively scuffle between dog and master at the very entrance of the room. Finally Treverin, laughing and breathless, threw himself into a chair, while the dog—a beautiful collie—stood before him panting, but respectfully triumphant, and wagging an apologetic tail.

"Rick," began Treverin, in mock seriousness, ignoring the canine presence, "I want your opinion of a dog" (Yampa's tail wagged harder), "who has so far forgotten his training as to be guilty"—Treverin's voice was low and stern—"of disobedience." The motion of Yampa's tail ceased suddenly and his eyes pleaded for extenuation. "And has so far forgotten his morals as to be guilty of petty larceny." Treverin's brows came together in a heavy frown, and the dog's expressive tail was incriminating in its limp dejection.

"The case looks serious." Richard Wood's low indulgent laugh brought hastily around in his direction the dispirited Yampa's hopeful glance.

"It is serious, Rick," in Treverin's voice was well-feigned wrath; "it's appallling when you come to think of it." Yampa's dignity could bear up no longer in an atmosphere surcharged with his master's displeasure, and dropping disconsolately to the floor, with his head upon his fore-paws, he endured his arraignment in reproachful silence.

"The motive of this outrageous crime," Treverin went on impressively, "was, I fear, jealousy, which, unfortunately, Rick, the prisoner at the bar, was known

to entertain for a certain photograph that has occupied a position of prominence in his master's room." The dog, fully conscious that his misdeeds were under discussion, listened gravely to the statement of his case, glancing quickly from man to man, for the faintest sign of human understanding.

"Sit up, Hassayampa! Look me in the eye, sir! Have you, or have you not, been seen to eye that picture wickedly when your master chanced to glance in its direction? Did you or did you not bark quite furiously on one ocasion when a remark, that was not unfriendly, happened to be addressed to the person it portrays? Were you, or were you not, heard to growl, in savage accents, only today when that same picture was taken down to be packed and placed upon a chair, and will you, or will you not, admit its disappearance while my back was turned?"

The dog's expression was enigmatical as he gazed into his master's eyes and Treverin, turning to Wood, asked, dramatically, "Has he chewed and knawed it as he might have done with a bone?" Yampa's tail expressed humiliation at the suggestion of such an utter lack of discrimination. "Or has he simply worried it in the way he treats a rat?" The dog looked his disgust. "At least he must have hidden it, but he will not show me where."

"Attention, Hasssayampa! Do you, or do you not, plead guilty to this theft?" Yampa's head went up proudly, while Yampa's canine soul was pleading dumbly for comprehension of the motive that may inspire an act.

"Ah, Rick," and Treverin shook his head hopelessly, as he caught the look of adoration in the dog's eyes, "we had better dismiss the case. This dog, I fear, is worthy of his name."

The little episode, with its appealing byplay of expression, Richard Wood had watched in amused silence, and had forgotten as soon as it was over. On the following evening, however, circumstances brought it to his mind.

Having said good-bye to Treverin and having watched his train pull slowly out of the junction, Richard Wood had returned to his own car and to the business acquaintances who were to accompany him upon the journey South.

The day had been a hard one, and that recent parting with "the boy," not the lightest of its burdens to this man whose life—so broad in its diffusion of pleasure, so wide in its wealth of impersonal devotions—had left him somehow strangely athirst for a deeper draught of the wine of joy.

His love for the Territory had been the one romance of his youth—absorbing to the point of exclusion—and he had found her a jealous mistress. In her need of him she assumed a significance that was quite intimate and personal, and it made her demands upon him seem legitimate as well as right.

The grand passion of a large nature is distinctive in its inspiration, and leaves little room for a weakening indulgence in minor emotions. Deep-rooted affections may spring up in its shadow, but their separate and individual strength will lie in the fact that they are

conservative of, rather than destructive to, the original heart-throb.

Late in the evening, however, he had left his guests for the moment and, alone in his stateroom, was searching through his luggage for a set of drawings which they had expressed a desire to see, when he came upon a photograph that he had never noticed before.

Held to the light, the picture revealed a girl in a quaint and dainty frock making her curtesy to the world. Reluctant, she paused at the threshold of life, her smile expectant, her eager youth as buoyant with hope as an idyl of Spring, but she carried a sheaf of Autumn flowers.

They were long-stemmed beauties, whose glorious heads swept across the filmy folds of her gown with a certain air of stately grace that harmonized with another ideal than that expressed through the girlish loveliness of her sweet immaturity. It was as though these magnificent chrysanthemums, in their insistent whiteness and cool remoteness, arrogated to themselves the proprietary right to maintain for her the theory that perfection of type is only produced through that high degree of cultivation which had contributed to their own rare development. Dominating as they were, however, in their subtle suggestion of an idea, the flowers could not quite create the atmosphere of a picture whose vague power lay in the fact that it had caught somehow a fleeting expression of that evanescent light of soul which was held in the mystery of her eyes.

Fearlessly raised to his very own he could read them now to their limpid depths. The veil of the miniature

—here—was withdrawn, and *this* was "the boy's" sister.

For one brief moment there flashed through his brain, like the music of half-forgotten strains, the memory of a truant phrase—a phrase which he could not quite forget: "For that, one sometimes has to wait."

Waiting—was she waiting still? While Destiny dreams there is always hope—the hope of fulfilled promise.

But the photograph was placed in his inner pocket, with Richard Wood's only comment:

"There are times when all is fair, Yampa—when a man and a dog claim their share of the spoils."

CHAPTER XI.

"And the gods send thread for a web begun."

FOUR o'clock of an afternoon in mid-October discovered Richard Wood ascending one of those steep bridal-paths that are to be found limning the granite walls of grey, old mountains which guard the hidden treasures of a mining district as inaccessible as any in Arizona. His horse had long ago dropped into that easy gait which distinguishes the practiced climber from the novitiate, and which leaves the rider sufficiently free from the sensation of motion to enjoy that larger exhilaration which must come to him who finds himself, all at once, poised, as it were, on a ledge of the universe.

For the initiated the whole region holds a wealth of association as thrilling and as varied as the romance of mining. By means of its extricable tangle of zig-zag trails the history of many a rich vein of ore may be traced in much the same way that rare values in a priceless canvas are defined through the recognition of the earliest master strokes of original genius.

The very names which are borne in upon the consciousness, as the eye travels across miles upon miles of unlimited space to the outermost rim of a far horizon, suggest tales that might rival those of "A Thousand and One Nights" in their picturesque detail of descrip-

tion—tales which bring forth indisputable figures to corroborate their almost fabulous profusion of statement as to values in silver and gold ,tales which would seem to prove the reality of that magic touch which explained away so many doubts to an oriental imagination.

The scenery itself would form an impressive background for the setting of many a fanciful story. On the left, in rock-ribbed sternness, the pine-covered hills rise repellant and somber in their unapproachable height. On the right and below is the sharp declivity that marks a sudden breakdown of mighty mountain into cliff and narrow canyons and isolated peak, which seem to have tumbled precipitately toward the South, and the depths of a bowl-shaped depression that creates a veritable basin in the heart of the hills. Looking east and northward a broad panorama of wide valley stretches away in swelling earth-waves, with fleeting glimpses here and there of a delicate tracery of green that proclaims where living waters flow. Far beyond is the doubtful contour of blue mountain masses, looming vague and shadowy in the distance, and bringing out with sharp distinctness, in their own immediate foreground, the fantastic sculpture of castellated buttes and the rich coloring of Nature's painting on the weathered rocks. Gorgeous and variegated is the whimsical ornamentation of those rugged crags and tapering pinnacles, suggestive of the towers and domes and lofty minarets that crown the decadent splendor of crumbling Byzantine ruins.

Richard Wood had almost reached the crest of the

divide—which separates those two small creeks whose fame has been written in placer gold—when he heard a sharp clatter of rolling stones and the beat of a horse's hoofs overhead.

The path, as it wound upward was narrow and precipitous, admitting little more than space enough for a single horse and his rider. Here and there an indentation in the wall of rock, at the left, or a projecting promontory, on the right, afforded some width and sufficient safety for passage, but even at these points there was need of more caution than seemed to be manifested by the rapid approach of that rushing steed.

Nearer and nearer it came, while Richard Wood, having withdrawn into the friendly angle of a sheltering crag, watched for its appearance on that dusty trail which twisted before him, in short turns, up and around a green wall of mountain with the clear distinctness of white lines on the colored surface of a map.

To one who could judge by sound alone, the oncoming horse now seemed perilously near. Almost above him, at times, it was heard, but Richard Wood knew his ground too well to miscalculate the number of minutes that must elapse before he could catch his first view of this unknown rider who descended upon him with such reckless and precipitate haste. He realized, moreover, that only a glimpse would be vouchsafed to him—that he would probably see the horseman's face, might even hear the sound of his voice—before (if he would) he could touch the hand of the stranger, when

at length they should meet on this narrow ledge, where he waited alone. For, back and forth on the mountain side—hither and yon—then up and across, much in the manner one sails a ship, tacking about for his ultimate goal—was the way a man must follow this road.

At last he sighted the horse's head flashing swiftly around a bend that was high above him and far away. The foaming mouth and flying mane told him of the unexplained, even before a closer view showed him the animal's blood-shot eye.

Onward it came at topmost speed—as fleet of foot as a mountain goat. Wild and unseeing with fright and fear, crazed to the point of madness, it seemed. Glancing neither to right nor left, it stared straight ahead like a beast pursued by some nemesis of a forgotten past, like a horse who sought to stay his doom by a last wild race with the horrors of death.

Looking along the tightened lines for the hand that governed the champing bit, Richard Wood was, at once aware that a woman was holding the bridle-rein —a woman whose face was white and set, whose lips, he saw, were tensely drawn.

The sun had transformed the flying dust to the rose-colored tints of enveloping clouds which seemed to have borne her through the air, at a perilous pace, to these rocky crags. Among them she rode as the Valkyries ride with the courage of hope and the strength of faith and nerves that were steeled to a fine control that is rarely seen in the weaker sex.

Her peril was clear to Richard Wood, but how to save her was scarcely as plain. To attempt and to fail would

but double her risk and the hazard of trial made that chasm below seem deeper and darker than ever before. Her jeopardy now was very great, but her chances were even, he told himself. She might, somehow, escape those shuddering depths, whereas, if he tried and did not succeed—her danger—he dared not think of it. "For I mean to try, and I must succeed," was the instant decision of Richard Wood.

She had almost reached that point in the trail from which she might hear his voice when he spoke. She might also perceive, if she chanced to look, where he stood, with his horse, well out of the way. He intended that she should both hear and see, for he preferred to have her co-operation, although he had determined to help her, if necessary, in spite of herself.

Fortunately his own horse whinnied at a propitious moment and, looking down, she discovered him just as he was upon the point of uttering a very definite command which seemed to have written itself upon the still air, so clearly did it penetrate her brain.

"Jump when you reach me," was what he said.

He gave her a minute to comprehend, another moment to make up her mind, and then his second order came.

"When I shoot the horse, don't lose your head."

That was all. She had vanished around a bend, and he knew that the time for action was near.

Moments dragged, and their slow suspense brought phantoms of fear to worry his brain. What if she did not get free of her mount—were caught by a stirrup and dragged from the rim? The grasp that would save

must be swift and sure. Timed to the instant the shot that could kill and still leave room for contingencies.

No better view of the trail could be had than that which obtained from where he stood. Sheltered himself, he could yet command a long stretch of road, could aim and fire at a range so close that her horse need not shy nor be ever aware of a presence so near.

"At last," he breathed. Then he caught her eye and his hand was steady, his brain was clear. A second more and he had her safe, while the horse, with a snort of rage and pain, leaped far beyond them, then staggered and fell breathing his last on the very brink.

A niche in the wall formed a sort of seat where he placed her gently and pillowed her head with saddle-blanket on saddle-bags. Her eyes were closed, and he saw that her hands hung limp and lifeless against the stone. With a reverence as fine as the gesture was firm he drew off a glove to test the pulse, and felt that her fingers were very cold. When he forced some brandy between the lips, her muscles tightened and then relaxed, the eyelids quivered and half unclosed, then dropped again, as though the weight of their tremulous lashes had proved too much.

Instinctively he realized that she had not lost consciousness for a moment; that she was merely allowing her overwrought nerves a brief second for recovery from the fearful tension which had left her, without doubt, strangely weak and loth to make the effort of meeting a new and trying situation. He imagined that what she most needed were time and quiet; that nothing would prove more annoying than the bustling application of

futile restoratives with which we sometimes administer so-called relief. He waited calmly, therefore, until she should elect to face present conditions and, in the meantime, his active mind came to some very definite conclusions.

Her riding-habit was distinctly of the East. He had already observed that fact, and it prepared him for the side-saddle which he removed from the dead horse, without surprise. A closer examination of the animal, however, seemed to bring further revelations which evidently altered his original intention with regard to its body. He had meant to dislodge a hindering stone which would have made it a comparatively simple process to roll the carcass—already half way over the brim—from the outer edge of the steep incline. But, on second thought, he concluded to allow it to remain where it was—well out of the path, which widened just here and gave room. "For the scoundrel must have his lesson this time," was the mental comment with which he dismissed an unpleasant subject from his thoughts.

He had hardly returned to her side, moreover, when he found that all problems had dropped into insignificance except an insistent question as to her identity.

Why did the monogram upon her gauntlet seem so strangely familiar? Had he never seen the letter *B* arranged with an *E* and a *T* before? He experienced a momentary feeling of self-scorn as he asked himself a question whose answer was so obvious.

The device, though ingenious, was very simple, and yet somehow its delicate tracery of intertwining gold held for him all at once the vague illusive fascination

of some intricate labyrinth in whose mysterious mazes he had been, for a long time, lost.

And then, suddenly, he knew—much of which he had not dreamed—more at which he had only guessed flashed upon him with sudden light; he knew *where* the threads of Fate had crossed—he knew *when* his life had first met hers; and he wondered if many more eons must pass till she gave him a glimpse of her eyes.

They opened at last. Their gaze was direct, and their glance, he saw, was collected and clear. For a moment they read him through and through to the depths it seemed of his very soul—and then:

"It was more than clever," she said. "Your coolness was splendid, your courage, I think, was exceedingly fine."

"And yours"—— he paused; for he felt that *her* praise had been wholly impersonal, even though it rang sincere. There had been frank enthusiasm in her manner and even admiration for the act. He was vaguely aware, however, of a certain nicety of distinction with which she reserved any further tribute of appreciation. He rather fancied that she was waiting for an opportunity to catch a note of individuality in order that she might later render some meed of thanks to the man; and for the first time in his life Richard Wood understood the differential quality that may exist in a simple expression of gratitude. He realized that his intuitions had not led him astray as soon as he saw the quick look of surprise and pleasure with which responded to his own instant change of subject. It had taken the form of a stern question with which he interrupted himself—

"But how did you come to be riding that horse? At least," he corrected, hastily, "I should very much like to know—if you recognize my right to ask?"

Her laugh was merry and low and clear. It assured him that she was not offended, although it told him how really she was amused.

"*Noblesse oblige,* Monsieur, and even when one *has* won the rank of commander it might be wiser not to press a point too far. However, upon the subject of that unfortunate horse"—she grew grave and shivered slightly as she glanced in its direction—"I certainly acknowledge your right to question me, and I think one might accord you the doubtful privileges of a catechism."

She seemed to have recovered completely from her recent shock and was talking now with the utmost composure. He marveled at the quiet grace with which she fitted into her unaccustomed surroundings, at the *savoir faire* with which she adjusted herself to such impromptu comforts as he had been able to devise among the rocks. Apparently unconscious of incongruities, she was as smiling and at her ease as though she were surrounded by the luxuries of her grandfather's drawing-room. Only the dust upon her habit, the heavy lines under the brave eyes, and her slightly disheveled hair reminded him of how much she had but lately endured.

"Query number one was—let me think—how did I come to be riding that horse?" She smiled up at him as she spoke. Her tone was a faint echo of his own sternness, and her manner carried a slight trace of the

father confessor's way, with which she evidently meant to invest him. Otherwise she appeared to be entirely serious, with the exception of that humorously quizzical expression of the eyes.

"Well, then, Monsieur"—— she paused with a momentary lifting of eyebrows, and he added his name quite simply. A flash of something that might have been either surprise or recognition, either wonder or conviction, lighted up her face and she seemed on the point of an exclamation. Checking herself, on the instant, however, she resumed evenly: "Well, then, Mr. Wood, to the best of my ability, I shall relate the facts, even though they may involve my own condemnation.

"The horse was obtained in the town of—— from a man who called himself Dumford."

"I guessed as much," commented Richard Wood, briefly.

She evidently noted the interruption but went on, quickly, in reply to his manner more than to his words. "It would not be fair to blame the man, however, until you have heard both sides of the case.

"I was determined to ride. My friends contented themselves with the only conveyance that this Dumford could provide, and"—she hesitated a moment then went on with a rueful smile—"I was not exactly equipped for riding as women are accustomed to ride, here. This was the only horse to be had which was not afraid of a side-saddle, and the man had satisfied my cousin with the assurance that it was 'not a native broncho,' but"—she mimicked the broad farce of a crude wit as though it had tickled her fancy—" 'like all

other importations from the East—thoroughly well-bred.' "

"That sounds exactly like Dummy. His effrontery is proverbial, although the rascal can be rather droll, at times." Richard Wood smiled as he caught the spirit of her infectious humor.

"It was a very neat way of putting it, was it not? I thought such cleverness deserved its reward, and it quite decided me to take the horse—although my cousin, I fear, was far from pleased."

"Almost any native horse would have been safer." Richard Wood was again serious. He felt that she must realize the gravity of the situation.

"But the animal was quiet and well-behaved when we started. He might almost have been in a trance, so little did he seem to notice the presence of the saddle. I am inclined to believe that he did not feel it until we had gotten a short distance beyond the others. Then, suddenly, without warning, he was off like the wind, and"—— for an instant he noted the somber shadows of painful memory in her eyes. "I know very little about the rest excepting the fact that I am here; and that it is very good to be safe," she said.

In her swift change of expression there was light and warmth. Her smile, at last, was for him alone. She was not less grateful for the act, but an act may not claim the personal note unless, perchance, it reflect the man.

CHAPTER XII.

"Work of his hand
He nor commends nor grieves:
Pleads for itself the fact;
As unrepenting Nature leaves
Her every act."

—*Emerson.*

"I HAVE been wondering," and the girl's face was again serious. Its swift play of expression seemed to follow in the wake of her thought, much as—with slower accuracy—the changing shadows record themselves upon a sundial, "how I might let the others know—how I could most quickly assure them that they need not look for me—there."

She nodded gravely toward the abrupt declivity that marked the edge of the path, and then, as if in apology for what might look like the exaggeration of a possible idea, she added:

"They will, naturally, be anxious, you know."

"Of course," he replied, simply. "I, too, have been thinking of that."

He noticed with surprise her quick look of appreciation. His practical assumption of other people's burdens was so nearly second nature that most persons, himself included, had grown to regard the habit as a mere matter of course and he rather wondered that this girl (with the queenly air of one accustomed to much

willing service) should not, also, have taken his interest for granted.

"Are you familiar enough with the country to remember where you left them?"

She considered a moment, as though reviewing every detail at her command.

"It couldn't have been more than two o'clock when we left A——, taking the road for 'The Lone Star Mine.'"

"The Lone Star!" he interrupted, quickly. "That —is on the other side of the divide—down the valley, and"—— he thought swiftly. "Your horse must have cut into the Denby Trail. That runs out of the 'Lone Star' road at a point nearly eight miles beyond town and is only possible for one on horseback. Was any one else riding?"

"No one," she told him, quietly.

"Then it would be necessary for them to return to A—— for saddles, before following you. Even then, there are a half-dozen trails that diverge from the main one, which is The Denby. It is now"——he drew out his watch and made a rapid mental calculation. "There is only one way to do it," he said finally. "Do you feel at all equal to riding?" Then, as he noted her scarcely perceptible hesitation, "my horse is absolutely safe, although," and in his laugh there was that spirit of eternal youth which is the finest essence of humor, "her name is Midnight, and I shall have to confess that she was bred in Arizona. I might assure you that she is very susceptible to influences that are not native,

but, on the whole, it may be better to wait until she has proved herself worthy of your confidence."

"But do you think that Midnight—I like the name—could overlook the foibles of an outsider?" and the girl touched lightly the skirt or her habit.

"I feel sure that she could appreciate being trusted," he replied gravely, as he led out the mare—a beautiful black—which had remained apparently unmoved amid the disturbed limitation of her surroundings. Now, however, her intelligent response to her master's touch seemed almost intuitive, and her instant interpretation of his low-toned suggestions proclaimed the natural fineness of her instinct.

As Richard Wood adjusted saddle and trappings to his own satisfaction, the girl watched him quietly. She liked his quick conclusiveness, his mastery of detail, and when he turned to her, at length, with a decided "Come," she gave him both her hands with a sudden little gesture of cordial confidence. She seemed to have the gift of making even a very simple act so peculiarly her own that it became, at once, the vehicle of more subtle expression, and now, without the slightest tinge of coquetry, she had implied a frank acknowledgment of her dependence upon him in much more than the trivial matter of getting to her feet.

"And you are not at all nervous?" he questioned, as he put her on his horse. She had adjusted herself more firmly in the saddle, and was on the point of taking the reins from his hand, before she asked, rather evasively:

"Do you discover the slightest trace of fear? Is

not Midnight beautifully quiet? She makes one realize how slight a thing is custom, how small a point is the matter of environment when the essentials are inbred."

"Your faith is generous," he replied, smiling, "but it would be hardy fair to tax it too far." She noticed that the lines were still in his grasp, and that he evidently meant to retain them.

"I intend to lead Midnight," he explained briefly, and her quick "Thank you," told him something of her relief from an anxiety which she had not shown.

And so he brought her down the mountain through the brief October twilight, until they came, at length, to the mouth of what he had described as a short tunnel under the hills.

After a few words with the grimy individual who had emerged from a black gap that yawned darkly on the face of the cliff, they heard the dull rumble of distant wheels, and the far-away echo of a voice followed by the sharp cracking of a whip.

"Up, Jenny, for we're comin' to the light,
Comin' to the light, comin' to the light.
Get up, Jenny, for we're comin' to the light.
Out into the light of d-aa--y."

The song ceased suddenly as a brown mule, blinking in instinctive preparedness for the accustomed glare of the noonday sun, opened grateful eyes upon the unexpected surprise of a deepening twilight.

"And now cometh the second gnome," murmured the girl delightedly. "The setting makes one feel so perilously near to being part of a play."

"It almost begins to look like melodrama, doesn't it?" he asked, smiling.

"It held all the elements of tragedy—for me; but you are giving it the ending of a comedy," she said.

Richard Wood was helping her to dismount, and she heard the driver, whose stentorian tones had aroused echoes that were even now reverberating among the retreating shadows, ask his fellow workmen in a stage whisper what had brought "the boss" back "so durned quick."

"Dunno, guess he's goin' down to —— special," the other had replied, *sotto voce,* and then both men began to obey Richard Woood's terse orders with that eager haste which is born of respect and fear finely tempered with a genuine desire to please.

The girl watched with fascinated eyes the dumping of a heavily loaded ore-car, the hasty dusting out of its deep bed, and an impromptu arrangement of cross-boards which were to serve as seats during the short journey underground.

A moment later they were moving along a subterranean passage, dark as Erebus. Directly through the base of a mountain—for a distance of almost two miles, uncovering rich ore veins at great depth—the tunnel appeared to have been blasted through solid rock which walled them in so closely at times that she could touch its cool hardness with her hands. She heard, now and then, the voice of Richard Wood above the rattle and roar of the creaking wheels, and knew that he was warning her from danger overhead. At such moments she felt enveloped and strangely oppressed by the vast-

ness of the surrounding mountain, and its obtrusive nearness gave her a crushing sense of its power. She guessed enough at the problems of mining to realize that here a stern contest with Nature had taxed the ingenuity of man, but her own feeling of futile impotence in the presence of what once had been titanic struggle was new and terrible.

She wondered if it were simply the comfort of human companionship that made the presence of the man beside her assume a significance that was vital to her present peace of mind.

Now and then, where the car stopped, a light shown through the murky shadows, and then the sudden stillness made it possible to speak. It was during these pauses that he answered her questions as to their surroundings, explained the points that puzzled her, and related various amusing episodes in the history of the mine.

He talked well, but less brilliantly than many men she had known, and yet his conversation aroused in her somehow a keener interest. She often caught herself listening for the things he left unsaid, and wondering how large a measure of reserve force lay hidden behind the strong lines of his face.

The face, she fancied, had been molded as the mine had been made in the carrying out of some purpose, clearly defined and definite as the narrow track whose rails were ever before them. It marked, no doubt, as did they, an avenue through which gold had been found and taken out. But it was the by-paths—the cross-cuts, he had called them—that enticed her imagi-

nation. She caught glimpses of them here and there—long dim vistas that stretched far beyond the parting of the ways, where grimy faces stared out at them through the gloom, and the intermittent sound of pick and drill reminded her that neither mines nor characters are built merely for exploration.

And then again it was the tunnel itself that appealed to her; the rough beauty of hewn rock and its stern irregularity of outline. During rare moments of infrequent silence she heard the friendly music of running water, and caught now and then a cool drop from some underground spring upon her forehead.

"How soon one can grow accustomed to darkness!" she exclaimed. "And after all half the beauty of a cavern is its gloom. It creates illusions so wierd and fantastic that one could imagine this some fascinating grotto in the kingdom of Pluto."

"Prosperina might be speaking from memory," he said, and the words, though distinct, were very low. The jolting car had stopped for the moment, and she realized through the half light that he was smiling down into her eyes.

"You extract 'big values,'" she parried, adapting quickly a new phraseology, "even out of the small coin of conversation. But," she interrupted herself quickly, changing the subject with evident relief, "surely, at last, 'We're coming to the light—out into the light of d-a-a-y.'" She hummed the air gayly under her breath, looking beyond him, the while, and Richard Wood felt a sudden wild temptation to tell her how lovely she really was. Instead of that, however, he an-

nounced quite practically that the day was over, and that what she actually saw was the light of an early moon.

"What a glorious world!" she cried enthusiastically, as the car stopped with a final jerk, out under the shadow of the frowning hills.

A broad valley lay below them flooded in white light, while the windows of tiny cabins that clustered about the base of the mountain blinked at them like fiery eyes. The nearness of the simple little homes, with their promise of warmth and cheer, made her realize suddenly that she was very weary and quite cold.

The chug-chug of a locomotive, getting up steam, warned her, however, that they still were going on, and far down the track an engineer leaning from his cab blew a sharp whistle as they came into view.

A few minutes later Richard Wood was giving directions for her comfort to the man in waiting at the steps of his car, and after explaining to her that he would join her at dinner as soon as he had seen to the sending of some half-dozen telegrams (which, he hoped, would discover the whereabouts of her friends), he was gone.

Returning, presently, he found her, looking refreshed but a trifle pale, and pouring over a map that she had discovered spread out upon the desk.

"Ah," he exclaimed, and he felt a sudden pleasure in her interest, "you are realizing your surroundings."

"This makes them delightfully clear," she replied, studying the drawing intently. "We all started there; and here is the Denby Trail; and this must be the place

where you came to the rescue and''—— she paused a moment, smiling, then looked up with shining eyes.

''And this,'' he interrupted, looking over her shoulder and indicating a small spot on the map, ''is where your friends will be waiting, and—we shall join them there in an hour.''

''I shall begin to fear that you are a magician,'' she cried, rising as dinner was announced.

''Endow me with powers more than natural, and I might sometime get,'' his laugh rang clear with the warm hope of youth, but his voice had dropped to a minor key, ''what I want.''

''But that,'' she objected, ''is not the mission of a magician.''

''What, then, is his mission?'' he inquired, whimsically, smiling across the space that intervened between them. She sat opposite to him at the head of his table, and for the moment he was filled with a great content.

''Obedience in fulfilling the wishes of another,'' she told him, merrily.

''Then the problem will be to discover those wishes and—to make them conform—to his own.'' His manner was direct and very simple, but she felt the lurking danger that lay below the surface of his words, and knew that his choice of tenses had not been accidental.

''Enigmas,'' she said gravely, ''are the pitfalls of conversation.''

''But they can often give zest to life,'' he finished, with a seriousness that quite equaled her own.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The gods are to each other not unknown."
"Friends also follow the laws of divine necessity; they gravitate to each other, and cannot otherwise. Their relation is not made, but allowed."

WHEN the stage from Echino Springs drew up, with a flourish, beside the little platform at X, there was a stir among the half-dozen cowboys lounging, across the road.

"What's up, tonight, Jake?" asked a genial bar-tender of a surly switchman who had come over the way for "a sandwich and a glass," to fortify himself against the lateness of his evening meal.

"Nothin' but a special from up the line—President, I guess; though it can't be him *they're* waitin' for," and the man called Jake nodded contemptuously in the direction of the gay English coach and its well-groomed horses. "*He* wouldn't waste much time on that outfit, *I* bet," he added sententiously as he munched noisily at his bread.

"They're a queer lot up at the springs, I guess," said the bar-man, speculatively. He was from New England, and had found gossip a profitable ally, now and then, in the business of "turning money." "You can't get old Pierre to do much talkin', but the Baron says it's a brave sight to see those swells

digin' potatoes or hoein' corn like any other sweatin' sons of Adam."

"The Baron's paid fer talkin', Andy," snapped Jake, turning from the pleasantly lighted bar-room to go back to his post but lingering just long enough to hear the insinuating voice of Andy, and the suggestion that there would be a hot drink waiting when his work should be over.

The last regular train had gone through fully an hour ago, and the station was deserted save for the presence of a sleepy telegraph operator dozing over the keys of his instrument. He looked up quickly enough, however, awake in an instant, when a lady and two gentlemen entered the stuffy little waiting-room.

The elder of the two men—who had broad shoulders with a superb head and the "ambrosial locks" of the Capotoline Jove, stepped at once to the ticket-window to ask for the latest word from the special up the line.

"Be here in ten minutes, sir," responded the operator laconically, surprised that "the man from the Springs, with the piercing eyes," should know anything about the matter. Then he added quickly, in the hope of further enlightenment:

"Expecting somebody, sir?"

"I am," replied the other shortly, as he turned away.

"Anything further, Mr. Swanson?" asked the lady of the group, who was middle aged, with a placid face that contrasted sharply with the worried expression of her eyes.

"Nothing, Mrs. Winston, excepting a corroboration

of the last telegram received at the Springs. It gave us, you will remember,'' he continued, with the air of one who realizes that a repetition of facts already known may sometimes possess the power to soothe, ''the hour of their arrival as well as the assurance of Miss Treverin's absolute safety.''

''I know, I know,'' responded Mrs. Winston, with some relief, ''but you can have no conception, Mr. Swanson, of the thousand and one additional questions that present themselves to a woman's mind. To think of my cousin wandering over those forsaken hills, for hours—alone—without even the protection of a groom, is—is quite horrible. I cannot wait to know the details of what the dear child has been through. Pray tell me, Bobby,'' she exclaimed with the sudden irrelevance of one whose nerves are not in full control, as she turned to the younger man who had not as yet, spoken, ''what our driver meant by implying that there was something quite wrong with that horse?''

''My dear Aunt,'' exclaimed the young man, evasively, ''had you not previously observed that the man was exceedingly fond of exaggeration? But,'' he added quickly, changing the subject with a swiftness that escaped the lady, although its significance was not lost upon the man at his side, ''I am wondering, my dear Tante, what possible good a groom could have been in those forsaken hills. I can imagine that even your resourceful Higgins would have found himself somewhat at a loss, on the Denby Trail.''

The eyes of Robert Travers twinkled roguishly, for

he knew each particular hobby of this dignified little woman whom he called aunt.

"His mere presence would have been useful," responded Mrs. Winston with some asperity, "even though he could have *done* nothing."

"And in what way, Aunt Cornelia?" teased the young man. "The pompous Higgins would have added an extremely ornamental touch to an otherwise barbarous landscape, but how, in the name of wonder, could he have been useful?"

"You seem to forget, Bobby," said the little lady, witheringly, "that a trusty groom is accepted as a conservator of the proprieties for a woman riding alone."

"I see," said Travers, solemnly.

"And," continued Mrs. Winston, with severity, "had Higgins been there, our dear Elizabeth might have been *spared* the ministrations of a stranger."

"Let me assure you, however, Mrs. Winston," broke in Swanson eagerly, "even without knowing the details of the rescue, that Miss Treverin could not have chosen her deliverer more fortunately. Wood is a man whose resourcefulness is as great as his courage, and a gentleman who has never yet been found wanting in an emergency."

"A splendid tribute, certainly," responded the lady appreciatively. "But you must realize, Mr. Swanson, that my niece is not yet aware of these pleasant facts, and may, therefore, at this very moment, be in the trying situation of owing her life to a stranger of whom she knows absolutely nothing."

"A most awful state, indeed, ma Tante, but prefer-

able, don't you think, to owing one's death to some villainous horse?''

Traver's shoulders were shaking silently, but, as usual, when he had succeeded in ''getting a rise'' (as he expressed it) out of Mrs. Winston, his face was deeply grave.

This time, however, his embarrassment was increased by an anxiously expressed fear on the part of the lady that he must have contracted a frightful cold, as he manifested signs of a chill.

''No, Aunt Cornelia, no,'' and he was well-nigh overcome with suppressed amusement. ''I have never enjoyed better health in my life—enjoyed is the word, I can assure you.''

''Come, Swanson,'' he added hastily—for he dared not trust himself farther—''let us go out and see if that blessed engine is in sight. You will excuse us, Aunty? Thank you. I promise to report in ample time,'' he called back cheerily, as they went out into the night.

''Now, tell me, Swanson,'' demanded Travers, as soon as they were alone, ''what the deuce is a 'locoed horse'? The expression, I might explain, was acquired by me from that fool of a driver who blurted it out the moment after this fearsome beast had run away and—as you have just observed,'' he added, apologetically, ''I was forced into teasing Mrs. Winston most unmercifully, in order to drive the question out of her mind. Now, however, I 'want to know, you know,' so that I may be prepared for anything there is to do.''

''From whom did you get the animal?'' asked

Swanson, tentatively. He had not been one of the expedition of that afternoon and, in reality, knew little more than the facts of the accident, which had been given to him, hastily, as soon as the party returned to the Springs.

"Dumford was the name of the man, commonly known as Dummy, I believe."

"And," exclaimed Swanson, "not over-scrupulous, Mr. Travers."

"I had begun to fear as much," replied the younger man, quickly. "We should not have trusted to his statements when it came to the matter of the horse. Miss Treverin, however, was anxious to ride. It was she, in fact, who proposed the impromptu trip to 'The Lone Star Mine,' which belongs, I understand, to this man, Wood. Miss Treverin's brother spent about a year up there—studying mining, I believe—and quite naturally she wanted to see a place of which she had heard something. We had several hours on our hands. The stage, you will remember, took us over to A—— immediately after luncheon, and was to return for the party at five. Several of us had exhausted the subject of ruins within half an hour, and when Miss Treverin confessed that she had caused a small piece of luggage to be smuggled into and then out of the stage with the hope of being able to wheedle Mrs. Winston into spending a day or two at A—— for the express purpose of visiting this mine—but had not the heart to suggest such a course since we had found the hotel so impossible —well, you may realize that we were ready to join in with the plan, Swanson."

"Of course," said the big man, simply. He had as yet been unable to imagine anything to which Elizabeth Treverin could not have persuaded him.

"But about the horse?" asked Travers, returning hurriedly to the subject uppermost in his own mind.

"The loco plant," answered Swanson, "is a poisonous weed which few animals will touch. Now and then, however, a horse contracts a strange liking for the herb, and the taste is said to grow into a passion. It is a matter of common belief that the effect of the plant upon the animal organism is nearly akin to the influence of morphia upon man—that a horse addicted to the use of it is hardly sane when under its power, and finally dies mad; that although a beast may be quite right for long intervals, when the craze is upon him he will have a wild look in the eye which defies description. Stock accredited with the habit is said to be 'locoed.' I cannot vouch for the *truth* of these statements, my dear Travers. They have seemed to me sometimes like quaint superstitions which have been fastened upon unfortunate members of the animal family whose wrong-headedness could not always be explained away. This man Dumford has, I hear, gone much farther in his imaginative folly upon the subject. He has evolved the strange conceit that melancholia resulting from new and uncongenial surroundings attacked this horse—a thoroughbred of some value, in his time—and tempted him to dissipation. He professes to trust the animal and to know when he is 'safe,' but as a matter of fact, no one else does, and Dumford's attitude has been a standing joke in the neighborhood."

"The scoundrel," exclaimed Travers, angrily; "it was criminal of him to allow us to trust her on its back."

"I suppose you tempted his cupidity," replied Swanson, "and as the love of money is certainly the root of much evil, with Dummy, he forgot his usual caution. Not even a suspicion has centered about the man in A——, and as yet he has been slippery enough to avoid having anything proved against him elsewhere."

"He shall be brought to book this time, or I'll know the reason why," said Travers, with finality, as the train came into view.

Richard Wood stood alone for a moment. A confused group on the platform had swept her from him, although his quick ear had not ceased to follow the clear sound of her voice. It was assuring somebody even now that she was delightfuly safe, thoroughly sound and, yes, there she was, at last, coming toward him through the gloom.

"He's right here, Cousin Cornelia," she was saying, gayly, "and remember, dear, he isn't a bit of a stranger, but Jack's friend, 'Rick Wood.' "

They were a few steps in advance of the two men—the tall girl with a little woman at her side, and a momentary silence carried the words farther than she could have thought possible.

His name on her lips thrilled Richard Wood as nothing yet had ever done. Afterwards he remembered Mrs. Winston's grateful cordiality, the warm grip of

Travers' hand, and how quickly he had yielded to Swanson's urging that he accompany them all to the Springs, but at the moment Richard Wood was conscious of but one personality.

"How did you know, Miss Treverin?" he asked abruptly, as soon as the introductions had been completed.

"How did I know that you were *the* Mr. Wood—is that what you meant to ask?" She looked up at him archly just as the station lights showed him that a demure smile was playing about her mouth. "You cannot think how good I am at guessing," she said.

"But you," she continued, reproachfully, "in the copies of those telegrams you had me down as 'Mrs. Winston's cousin' and——" she laughed, mischievously, "I purposely failed to help you out. Tell me, Mr. Richard Wood, how did *you* know that *I* was *I*?"

For a brief moment he had her to himself. Swanson was giving directions about his baggage and Travers was helping Mrs. Winston to her place upon the coach. She and he were alone with the intimate stars. Did the breath of a warm October night or his own firm lips voice that low reply?

"I believe I must have dreamed that *you* were the boy's sister."

"I had not thought you a man to dream," she said, slowly.

CHAPTER XIV.

"This world's a hollow bubble, don't you know.
Just a painted bit of trouble, don't you know.
We come to earth to cry,
We grow older and we sigh—
Older still—and then we die, don't you know."

When Richard Wood came downstairs, the following morning, he found Travers on the wide veranda smoking a solitary cigar.

"I infer, Mr. Wood," exclaimed that young man, pleasantly, "that we are fellow truants in our absence from the sunrise seance. For," he continued, in answer to Wood's inquiring look, "I should be willing to wager a good deal that you will have to plead guilty to having heard that confounded gong."

"The gong did pretty thorough execution, I admit," responded Wood, with an appreciative smile, as he recalled his startled awakening from an early morning nap, "but not being one of you Olympians——" He got no farther.

"'*You* Olympians'—Great Heaven!" interrupted Travers; and his expression of feigned dismay was so well done that Richard Wood was genuinely amused.

"That I should have lived to hear myself connected with this *fin de siecle* nonsense is quite too much."

"I suppose," said Wood, laughing, "that I shall have to apologize for misjudging you."

"Not at all," responded Travers, with cheerful alacrity, "but I shall ask you, Mr. Wood, to correct the serious mistake of having judged me by the company I keep. For I do solemnly swear, as between man and man (no matter how I may seem to perjure myself, later, in the presence of the ladies), that although at this moment you find him consorting with supereminence, Robert Travers is not now nor ever shall be of the supereminent, 'who walk in air and contemplate the sun.' "

"The pleasure of being able to retract an unfortunate remark," smiled Wood, who was beginning to be entertained in spite of himself, "is almost equal to that of realizing that there is some one else outside the fold. You appear to know the ropes here pretty thoroughly, Mr. Travers," he added, "and your impressions would be more than edifying to a man who finds himself decidedly at a loss in a transcendental atmosphere."

"Thank you, Mr. Wood, and—I should like to shake hands," replied Travers, with a grave impulsiveness that was very ludicrous. "It is a relief to be able to unburden oneself to a man who can appreciate the situation, although no one, Mr. Wood—no one," repeated Travers, dropping his voice to a tragic whisper, "can fully understand what I have gone through during the past week."

"Is it as bad as that?" asked Wood, with sympathy.

"It is worse than that, if anything," responded Travers with a groan. "I shall give you, Mr. Wood, without reserve, a brief history of my experience.

"Seven long days since the man before you arrived

at this place. He looked upon the cool beauty of this court of palms,'' and Travers waved his hand, dramatically toward the lovely patio before them.

''He gazed out over the green orange, the yellowing lemon and the grape-fruit ripening in the sun; over the fig, the pomegranate and the—the other things that grow here. He heard the distant splash and rush of the boiling springs, gushing from yon flinty rock, and he sighed, 'Here, at last, might a weary man find rest.' But, 'not so, Travers,' warned a voice within him like a premonition of what was to come, and I think I may assert that he began to be disillusioned the moment his eye discovered that fiendish little motto that introduces one to the 'Program for a Day in Paradise,' meaning Echino, my dear Wood. You haven't seen it yet? By George, I'll quote the thing, for it's getting on my nerves and I'd like to work it off through speech. Here goes then: 'Rest is not quitting the busy career. Rest is but fitting oneself to one's sphere.' '' Travers completed the couplet in a nasal sing-song, and then, after a long pause. meant to be impressive, he continued with a melancholy shake of the head: ''This man has not yet succeeded, Mr. Wood, in fitting himself to his present sphere.''

''The daily routine is, I understand, unusual,'' suggested Wood, curiously, looking along the deserted galleries.

''It is astounding,'' replied Travers. ''The gong, which is a relic from some Buddhist temple, sounds at sunrise, as you have observed. It arouses the faithful —as well as the unbelievers, like ourselves—at hours

ranging all the way from four to eight A. M., according to the time of year and the habits of the sun.

"After a rapt contemplation of an early morning sky the devotees of Nature—with a capital—are permitted to return to their slumbers for a few hours, if they can, in order to recuperate from the effects of an overdose of the emotions, as well as to reduce the temperature of the vocabulary from that state of feverish excitement superinduced by an excessive indulgence in adjectives coupled with exclamation points. I myself would recommend for the purpose the plentiful use of strong, warm, practical verbs, succeeded by cold showers of prosaic nouns. In fact," added Travers, with a whimsical smile, "I feel distinctly grateful to the Baron for voicing my own sentiments and bringing me down to the normal conversational level. That worthy has been deputed, it seems (because the servants 'gave notice' as soon as the idea was suggested to them), to sound the gong, which is unfortunately situated at my end of the corridor, and I have the pleasure of hearing him mutter repeatedly as he passes under my open transom, 'Durn all fools, durn them, I say.' The words prove so soothing," added Travers, smiling, "that I find myself actually able to go to sleep again.

"Breakfast," proceeded Travers, as Wood laughed appreciatively, "is not an early meal (hence this pleasant tete-a-tete), but, at the table, at least, every person is a free lance using his or her knife and fork in defense of vegetarianism, fruitition, mastication or whatever one's individual food fad may be.

"There is a rule, however, Mr. Wood, which is my particular *bete noir*. It recommends—recommends, mind you—that every aspirant to the joys of paradise occupy himself or herself during the morning hours at some useful form of outdoor labor—labor, my friend, is the word."

"Is it compulsory?" asked Wood, smiling at the lugubrious expression of Travers' countenance.

"It is obligatory," sighed Travers, laying his hand upon the arm of Wood's chair as though he had some weighty confidence to impart, "because Eve rules *this* paradise as well as the first, and public opinion has decreed that there is poetic beauty in that hackneyed phrase 'by the sweat of his brow.' In consequence of which, Swanson and the other enthusiasts don picturesque sombreros, and artistic neckerchiefs, roll their sleeves to the elbow for the better display of brawny arms, betake themselves to a desultory tilling of the soil, pore over volumes of horticulture, experiment in the culture of the date palm and discuss the pros and cons of Egyptian cotton. Ah there, I see, are my Aunt and Miss Treverin." Travers interrupted himself hastily, and tossing his unfinished cigar over the railing of the gallery, went to meet the ladies, while Richard Wood, following more slowly, wondered that so much energy should have concentrated itself in this pleasant little farce of life which was, for the moment, playing itself out at Echino.

A spot of rare beauty, endowed by Nature with exhaustless hot water springs, whose medicinal qualities had been recognized by the Indian and the early white

settler long before these gentlemanly idlers had dreamed of its existence, Echino had been purchased by Swanson from old Pierre Michet to be the *mise en scene* for the working out of a large Utopian theory. The plain white tents of former days had given place to the comforts and convenienees of a modern hotel, where these modern disciples of a new thought were making strenuous efforts to enjoy that artificial simplicity which appeals to the imagination of the esthete.

Paul Swanson, the leader of the movement, was a man of striking personality and boundless enthusiasms. His energies demanding the constant reenforcement of expression had taught him to do many things well. The son of an indulgent father, he had traveled widely, dabbled in the arts and trifled a bit with science, when a heavy cold threatened to attaek his lungs.

The doctors advised higher altitudes, and Swanson became, at onee, imbued with a secret determination to prove his metal by working his own way Westward. In apparent affluence when he said good-bye to his friends, he arrived in Chicago with little more than his tieket to an out-of-the-way plaee in Wyoming. For he had quite settled the fact that those uncashed drafts on New York whieh lined his inner poekets were to mean nothing in the new scheme of life, and it was his pride in after years to know them still unused.

When he arrived in Wyoming the first oeeupation that presented itself was the ehance to dig a eellar—a feat which he aecomplished with sueh suceess that the question of food and lodging ceased, at once, to be

pressing. Long before the completion of the cellar, moreover, he had established a reputation for fastidiousness and grit that left its mark upon the small community. The first day's work was scarcely over and its grime still upon him when Paul Swanson had startled the proprietor of the small hotel by the unprecedented request for a bath. Undaunted by the information that there was not a tub in the house, the stranger was seen to disappear within the portals of the general store, whence he issued ten minutes later, bearing upon his shoulder a huge galvanized specimen which the merchant had been wont to recommend for the family wash. He presented himself half an hour later among the coatless habitues of the supper room in faultless evening attire, that would have been hooted then and there save for the fact that a day's work which would have been no discredit to the best man of them all, counted in his favor.

After having tried cow-punching in Montana, mining in Colorado and ranching in Kansas, Swanson had turned up in Arizona, where the possibilities of extensive farming appealed to his imagination, and thereupon, as Travers expressed it, "he proceeded to have transcendentalism with the violence that usually attends a second attack of measles."

His father meanwhile had died, leaving to this wanderer the smallest share in a large estate, and Swanson found himself in a position to indulge a whim which his unusual gifts enabled him to carry out with tact and skill.

From a large circle of former friends he had drawn just those persons in whom he suspected a capacity for the insidious ennui that preys upon an aimless existence, and few of them had failed to be inspired by the ardent zeal with which he endowed the enterprise. The idea was unique; Swanson himself, not a bore, and something really new was worth going far to seek. Moreover, they had been assured of a decided "difference" even in the character of the scenery, of special "features" in the way of guides, each one of whom Swanson described as "an impressionistic splotch of local color on a background of strong individuality"; for Swanson had corraled the Baron and old Pierre Michet, rechristening them respectively "The Patriarch of the Valley" and "The Hermit of the Springs."

Old Pierre was of the race of the Canadian voyageur. He had come to the Territory in the 'sixties, with the lure of the gold strong upon him, but when discovered by Swanson had almost given up hope of attaining any distinction beyond that conferred by the Indians, who had dubbed him "Little White Man."

The father of many a trail, old Pierre was learned in the wisdom of the soil, and in the lore of curious rock formations. His quick ear could detect each thrilling bird-note through a rich variety of song. He had an artistic delight in the gorgeous plumage of his feathered friends, and the connoisseur's pride in a rare species he extended to every form of life. He knew each wild flower by name and loved it for its beauty of form, its fragile perfection of detail.

Modest and retiring, he was the direct antithesis

of the Baron, and expanded only in the genial atmosphere of sympathetic understanding. It was Elizabeth Treverin who discovered that he had a passion for geology and a practical knowledge of the subject which he had picked up from many sources, while to Pierre the girl's interest in realities was a surprise and robbed him of that diffidence which grew almost to terror in the presence of other women, with whom he felt that he had little in common.

The old guide was coming up the steps just as Travers greeted the ladies.

"Ah, Pierre, good morning," cried Elizabeth Treverin, stopping to receive a message which he evidently waited to give.

"Your flower-bed, Mam-selle—it is ready—M'sieu Travers—but"—— stammered the old man, evidently at a loss how to proceed.

Miss Treverin appeared puzzled for a moment, and then, a light breaking over her face, she turned to Travers who had waited while Mrs. Winston was speaking to Wood.

"How good of you, Bobby, Pierre has just been telling me that you spaded up my garden patch as you promised to do, but when did you do it? We were away all day yesterday and"——

"You forget, my dear Elizabeth," put in Travers, with dignity, "that four hours have elapsed since dawn."

"Oh!" exclaimed the girl, with amused incredulity, "*you* surely weren't up at sunrise?"

Old Pierre was about to withdraw, but Travers took him aside while Eliazbeth joined Mrs. Winston and Wood.

"How much do I owe you, old chap??" asked Travers in a low tone, as his hand went down into his pocket.

"Nothing, M'sieu," said the old man softly. "I have wished to do it for her." And with a smile and a low bow he was gone.

"Whew!" whistled Travers, "that means I've got to confess," and he sauntered lazily down to where Elizabeth was talking with Richard Wood.

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary, why don't your garden grow? Because heavy swells and charming belles do the digging and planting, you know."

"Ah," said the girl, ignoring Travers and glancing at Wood with laughter in her eyes, "he wants us to believe that he has had his share in the making of some garden."

"Are you fond of gardening?" asked Wood, innocently.

"I hardly know yet," she replied, frankly. "I love flowers and I thought I'd rather like to watch them grow, but"——

"Just at present," interrupted Travers, pleasantly, "the fine flower of ambition is rather running to seed. Gardening, with *us,* Mr. Wood," continued Travers, gravely, "is both a science and an art, and while we may not have mastered the science, we are no longer amateurs at the art. Here are some of our rules as to attitude and pose for a man: Place the spade in the earth, rest the hands upon the spade and turn the eyes

upon the face of one of the charming belles just referred to."

"And the correct attitude for the charming belle?" asked Wood, smiling.

"That," said Travers, "usually depends upon the skill of the man"——

"With his spade," finished Elizabeth.

"Upon the skill of the man," went on Travers, imperturbably, "with his eyes and his tongue. If he comes out with sufficient strength along these lines the charmer's attitude becomes that of one absorbed in the ground. Ideal for gardening, don't you think?"

"Mr. Travers." said the girl, witheringly, "is scarcely competent to judge of gardening except in the abstract."

"I rather inferred," said Wood, "that he had attempted something in the concrete."

"Ah, I had forgotten," she exclaimed with contrition, turning quickly to Travers, "about the spading, you know."

"Pray, don't mention it," cried Travers, hastily, "gardening by proxy has proved a fiasco."

"Did you," asked the girl reproachfully, "employ old Pierre?"

"I tried," said Travers, sadly, "but with the finesse of a John Alden he insisted upon spading for himself. And fer why?" demanded Travers, looking around upon his audience with the slow wink of an Irish comedian, "fer naught, thin, but the love of yez, if ye'll know the reason why."

"How dear of him!" she murmured, "and—it was

generous of you to confess,'' she added, naïvely, ''that while 'Adam delved and Eve span' Bobby played the gentleman.''

''It is good, at least, to be rated as honorable,'' laughed Travers, ''but I have other virtues as well. You would no doubt be surprised to hear—all of you—that I have been searching the Scriptures!''

''And wresting them to your own destruction, no doubt,'' added Mrs. Winston.''

''For Satan findeth mischief still for idle hands to do,'' quoted Swanson, joining the group.

''And I find,'' finished Travers impressively, ''that labor commenced when paradise ended. Then, wherefore, glorify labor.''

''Bobby,'' said Miss Treverin, smiling, ''sometimes I think that your talent for the trivial amounts almost to genius.''

CHAPTER XV.

"'I am half sick of shadows,' said the Lady of Shalott."

"MR. WOOD," asked Travers, as the two men came out of the breakfast room together, "what form of chastisement would you suggest my applying to that villain Dumford? The effective use of a horsewhip appeals to me strongly, I confess, since I understand that it will hardly be possible to reach him through the law."

"In this case, certainly, you would appeal to the law in vain," replied Wood, "and, as to the other form of correction, it wouldn't do, here, Mr. Travers. Revenge has a fatal tendency, you see, to express itself in but one way, and the method of attack is sometimes, I regret to say, from the rear."

"This man—one would infer—has not an enviable reputation," said Travers, gravely. "He deserves, you will admit, a sound thrashing, at least, and yet you advise me to allow him to go unpunished?" Robert Travers asked the question with a quizzical smile, as though he guessed the nature of the reply that the man before him would make.

"Not I!" exclaimed Richard Wood, with sudden vehemence. "I ask rather the privilege of making 'the punishment fit the crime.'"

"You want me to surrender him to justice at your hands—you would yourself take all the risk—and do you think," demanded Travers with gentle irony, "that I"——

"One moment," interrupted Wood, quickly. "You are mistaken. There will be no risk for me. The man is already in my power, and I know human nature too well—at least Dummy's share of it—to doubt the success of my plan."

"Which is??" questioned Travers.

"Which is," replied Wood firmly, "to see that he leaves the Territory."

"Whew!" and Travers whistled softly. "Here's castigation 'for you, this here!' Even the strong arm of the law couldn't do better than that—providing, of course, that the rascal prefers to remain."

"There is no question of that," answered Wood, with conviction. "And as the strong lines of his face relaxed into a smile, "I very much hope, Mr. Travers, that you will grant my request. It would afford an excuse," he added, persuasively, "for the settlement of several old scores."

"In behalf of whom?" Travers hesitated before the pronoun, but Richard Wood understood at once, by inference the delicate suggestion that restraint would be considered necessary, that, where Miss Treverin was even remotely concerned, the punitive function could not be too inclusive.

"In behalf of the Territory," said Wood, quickly. "The man has been burdening us with not a little unpleasant notoriety."

"Is such vengeance," asked Travers, relieved and smiling, "personal or official?"

"Both," replied Wood, laughing, "for he who would wear her favor carries her token in the lists."

"And you," exclaimed Travers, heartily, "have certainly won the right to do as you may think best in the matter! Which reminds me, Mr. Wood, that I haven't half told you what we think of the way in which you managed that dangerous little affair of yesterday."

"It was nothing more," said Wood, hastily, "than the simple act of shooting a horse."

"With a few attendant complications, from what my cousin tells me," added Travers. "You don't imagine for an instant, my dear Wood, that I failed to read between the lines of that brief description given on the coach last night. However, I can see that the heroic pose is distasteful," he continued, smiling, "and I don't intend to say more. Allow me, though, won't you, to suggest, before leaving the subject, that the world hasn't quite forgotten how to appreciate a brave man and—I honor courage from my heart, Mr. Wood," finished Travers frankly, holding out his hand.

"It makes a man wish," said Richard Wood slowly, as he felt the strong, warm clasp, "it makes a man wish, Mr. Travers, that he really *had* been brave."

They had paused at the wide doors which opened out upon a gallery where gay groups of enthusiasts were making plans for the day.

"Over what are you two men shaking hands so seriously?" asked a cordial voice behind them.

"Ah, here is Mrs. Winston," exclaimed Wood, turning quickly, with the relief of one who welcomes an unexpected change of subject. "I feared I should not see you, and I wanted to say good-bye."

"Good-bye!" exclaimed Mrs. Winston regretfully. "Surely, you are not going away so soon!"

"For a few days on business," replied Wood, "but I shall hope to see you all here when I return."

"You will find me, no doubt," smiled Travers, "completely prostrated by the rigor of the régime which we might have combated together if you only had remained."

"We can try, later, what a combination will effect," laughed Wood. "I have just received a long-delayed letter from John Treverin announcing your arrival, Mrs. Winston," he added, addressing the lady, "and what he says leads me to trust that you will let me have the privilege of showing you something of the Territory."

"It will be a great pleasure, Mr. Wood, I assure you," replied the little lady, with the frank enthusiasm of true appreciation, "for we have not yet ceased to congratulate ourselves upon the happy coincidence of *your* being Jack's friend." Richard Wood liked her at once, for the fine tact with which she allowed the emphasis of the pronoun to take the place of more definite expression.

"It is I who have cause for congratulation," he rejoined simply, as she gave him her hand.

"We shall be looking forward to seeing you again in a few days," she said. Her smile was warm and per-

sonal. He had attracted this woman of the world by the ease with which he fitted into an unaccustomed atmosphere and new scenes that were a tax upon the large tolerance of her own code. Without analyzing the secret of his individual magnetism she understood something of the nature of his gift of adaptation. She knew that to realize much out of the characters of others it is necessary sometimes to subordinate the more vital traits of one's own, and she had learned to value this subjective cognizance of the ego far above the more conscious altruism of unselfishness.

"Thank you, Mrs. Winston, and can you tell me where I shall find Miss Treverin?" asked Wood, as he was turning away.

"At the Spring House, I think, and in hiding, no doubt, with her share of the morning's mail."

"Would you advise me not to intrude?" he queried, smiling.

"To dare is human and—I have given advice before." She looked up at him archly, and he recognized that he had already won a strong ally.

"'He either fears his fate too much or his deserts are small,'" quoted Travers, gayly, "and I wouldn't admit the latter part of the proposition for a moment, Wood, if I were you. I'll warrant you could take a trick or two, today, merely on the strength of yesterday's deal."

"You are an opportunist, I fear," laughed Wood, shaking his head, "but, nevertheless, I'm going to cast a die, in spite," he added, humorously, "of that good advice which Mrs. Winston was tempted to give."

"*Pax vobiscum,* then," laughed Travers. "I like a *man,*" he added thoughtfully, as he watched Richard Wood vanish down a long avenue of trees, "who can grasp the main points of a situation at a glance."

"A remark that is *apropos* of what, exactly?" asked Mrs. Winston, with a curious little smile.

"A remark, *ma chere tante,* that is *apropos* of individual qualifications in general," responded Travers.

He realized that the Spring House would be deserted at this hour, and he felt a singular pleasure in the fact that, once more, he was to see her alone. He wondered if it was the complexity of her nature that attracted him. He had been wont to feel this same keen joy in grappling with the practical solution of some intricate mining problem, and it was one of his pet theories that the recovery of elusive values in ore marked the triumph of the age over complicated process. There was a glory of achievement behind the rich simplicity of a concentrate, and it made, he thought, a larger appeal to experience than the mere superficial glitter of free gold.

To a rustic seat among the trees he traced her by the dainty linen frock which he remembered to have noticed at breakfast. Its motif was simplicity, and in it she seemed somehow less remote.

"My excuse for the interruption will bear looking into," he announced, as he put an envelope into her hand.

"You seem very sure," she replied smiling, as she

gathered up her letters and made room for him to sit down, "that you're going to need an excuse."

"Forgiveness like this would put a premium on transgression," he responded lightly. "My pardon, however, is worth reading; it explains several things, and"—— he hesitated a second only, "I want *you* to understand *why* it took me so long to find you."

Following the direction of his glance she read his name upon the envelope which he had put into her hand, and saw by the scratched addresses that it had been forwarded many times.

"From Jack!" she exclaimed, quickly, and "may I?" as she caught the tenor of his wish.

"Aloud?"

"Certainly, monsieur." But he noticed with disappointment that she omitted the "Dear Rick," and wondered if it were because she suspected him of having heard her use of the name last night.

"Mrs. Winston and my sister," she read, "are leaving for Arizona, with a party of friends, tonight, and will probably arrive at Echino Springs early in October.

"I had counted on doing the honors of the Territory myself, especially that part of it which embraces the holdings of a 'right little tight little' property known as 'Queen Elizabeth Mine.' As things need looking after here, however, I shall have to surrender the pleasure and commend the invaders to your care in the hope that you will find time to look after them a bit.

"How I wish that I might be there to present the best friend in the world to the dearest sister in the

universe, but as the Fates have decreed otherwise, I can simply say, amen.

"Always faithfully,

"JOHN TREVERIN.

"I say, brother director, here's a good round cheer for the latest returns from the Q. E.! Even my grandfather is becoming an enthusiast and promises in future to be something better than an indifferent figurehead of a president for our festive little company. By the way, I must not forget to tell you that Barbara insisted upon becoming a stockholder before she left New York in order that she may *demand,* she says, her right to go through a mine which is the most distinguished namesake she has.

"Bob Travers says (I didn't mention that he's with them, did I?) that she's the most successful promoter he ever struck, because she makes him feel so dreadfully on the outside. Travers is a nephew, by marriage, of my cousin, Mrs. Winston, and a better proposition than the 'surface leads' of his character might prepare one to expect. Seriously, I believe he is beginning to be interested in mining, although heretofore he has belonged to the most conservative section of the old guard; but there's no question, Rick, that the recent depression has done its usual work with the investment public, which is learning gradually that a desperate flirtation with mining isn't half as dangerous sometimes as coquetting with gilt-edged securities."

"That is worse than a woman's postscript," she finished, laughing. "Frankly, I consider it the best part of the letter."

"It is like 'the boy,'" he replied, smiling reminiscently.

"Oh, but he's 'the boy' no longer. You can't imagine how much older and wiser he has grown, since"—— she waited for a brief second as though debating how far she might risk his understanding, "since you sent him home."

"I?" he exclaimed in amazement. "It was you, rather, who influenced his decision."

"Did he tell you," she interrupted, quickly, "how much I wanted it?"

"He—I—we all must have seen that it would be best," he stammered lamely, with the confused consciousness of how much he had learned through a letter which he was not supposed to have seen.

"Yes," she rejoined, thoughtfully, "some of us saw it then and all of us see it now, but, perhaps, you don't know that Jack has told me of the conversation that precipitated his decision. That," she was speaking slowly and there was a world of meaning in the grave eyes that looked into his own, "it seems to me, would mark with large suggestion the turning point in his life. I have wanted, often, to thank you," she added simply, "and you must let me do it now."

"You are giving me credit which I don't at all deserve," he said, sincerely, "though it's good to have you think that I helped to make you glad."

There was a moment of silence between them, during which she fitted her scattered letters into their respective envelopes, and he watched a straying sunbeam kindle myriad lights in her hair.

"I wonder," he asked at length, with an irrelevance which was not habitual, "I wonder why I feel as though I had known you a very long time?"

She smiled a little. Obviously the remark was a platitude, and yet oddly enough she was accepting it from him at its face value.

"We have already discovered that we have several tastes in common," she said.

"For instance?" and he raised his eyebrows questioningly.

"First of all, there is mining," she smiled mischievously; "we both think it the most fascinating pursuit in the world."

"Do we?" he laughed, with the sheer pleasure of hearing her express himself to himself. "And why?"

She was nettled for a moment, realizing that she had not fathomed him yet, however much she might pretend.

"Because," she began tentatively, feeling her way, "oh, because it has its complications, hasn't it? But it's delightfully simple when you understand, isn't it? And it's worth ever so much effort because of its being one of the surest of the scientific uncertainties. Now, pray, acknowledge that I've succeeded in confusing the issues so thoroughly that you hardly know where we started."

"But your views of mining are interesting." She felt that he was laughing at her with the humorous tolerance of complete understanding.

"Why did you not say unique? But I am a candidate for instruction, and I'm wondering if you'll

undertake to coach me. There are so many things I'd like to learn."

"The opportunity to teach you—anything—will be the chance of a lifetime; but"—— his eyes challenged hers, "you have not asked my terms."

"Could the question of terms make any material difference in a venture of this kind?" she asked gayly, ignoring his look. "Surely there will be enough treasure trove with your experience of mining."

"The treasure is already in sight, and—I think I recognize its value." There was a subtle note of suggestion in his tone that hinted at underlying depths of meaning. "But the final question will be one of possession, and much may depend upon the attitude of the pupil toward the teacher's large demands."

Accustomed as she was to the meaningless *laisser aller* of playful conversation he fairly took her breath. The words might have meant so little in themselves, but there were the eyes, the voice, the manner; and the fact that he was not the sort of person to indulge in a tempermental experiment, made it look like pure daring. His cool assumption of every advantage which circumstances had given him had rather amused her last night, but this was going rather far.

"One might pay in kind," she said calmly, "if the debt became too large. Is there nothing that the pupil might teach you in return?" The light irony of her tone following upon the veiled intensity of his own made him instantly conscious of that barrier of reserve —intangible but strong—with which, as the type of an older civiliaztion she would guard against the elemental

force of primitive impulse and intuitively he recognized its law.

"Couldn't you initiate me into the mysteries of gardening?" he asked, laughing, "as Mr. Travers described it?"

The idea was irresistably funny, and she was caught before she was aware of it in the eddy of that infectious humor with which he drew her from the stronger current of his own emotion.

"Ah, but you are one of the real workers!" she cried impulsively. Then with sudden gravity and a disdainful sweep of her hand that included their surroundings, "What *can* you think of this—I had almost said—laborious play!"

"I think," he said, gently, holding her eyes with that look which she was beginning to dread, "that, while theorizing too much about life, it might be possible to lose its universal essence."

CHAPTER XVI.

Death. What need of bow, were justice arms enough?
Apollo. Ever it is my wont to bear the bow.
De. Ay, and with bow, not justice, help this house.
Ap. I help it, since a friend's woe weighs me, too.
De. Who could buy substitutes would die old men.
—*Browning's "transcript of Euripides."*

"But it ain't reasonable, Mr. Wood—this here thing of—invitin' a man to leave the Territory without no explanation."

The injured innocence of the tone seemed slightly out of character; for the speaker was a man with evasive eyes, whose air of sleek prosperity gave the impression, somehow, of having been recently acquired.

"You will have the privilege of explaining several things before you are permitted to go."

Richard Wood's reply rang with no uncertain sound. His eye had been frequently upon this man who had turned up in A—— during the past year with an attractive stock of curios that made his little shop, across from the station, quite the most popular resort in town. Disreputable looking Indians and slovenly half-breeds were said to haunt the place at unseasonable hours, but the fact had called forth but little comment because even the most respectable element of the small community realized that a successful trader who would cater to the demands of the ubiquitous tourist

must sometimes obtain his wares through such unprepossessing specimens as these.

Swanson, as a student of men, might have had his own private doubts of the curio dealer, but Swanson was capable of keeping his own counsel, and thus it happened that Dumford by some lucky chance was in the full enjoyment of a not unpleasant local reputation on that morning in October when Richard Wood had calmly walked into his shop and suggested the wisdom of his shortly moving on.

"I 'spose," began Dummy, uneasily, assuming the defensive in a trivial matter as a point of vantage from which he might hope to confute more serious accusations, "I 'spose its got somethin' to do with that durned horse."

The shrewdness of his calculations were not lost upon Wood, who had been studying the man's methods for some time from a point of view which Dumford could hardly, as yet, comprehend.

"Of course," he went on, cringingly, "I couldn't have knowed they was *your* friends, Mr. Wood. But seein' as how there was no one hurt, and as how even justice would say that I've stood all the damage (by which I mean to mention the loss of a valuable animal—in case anybody might wish to make it good), I think, Mr. Wood, that we might call it square."

"Such reasoning," rejoined Wood, contemptuously, "would only go to prove that the Territory is not to lose a desirable citizen—when you go."

"Oh, I'm goin', am I!" exclaimed the other, with an angry scowl. "Hardly, I guess, Mr. Wood, not jest

yet, anyhow, seein' the law can't touch a man fer rentin' a skittish horse to a durn pretty girl that wanted mighty bad to have her own sweet way; and''——

"Drop the matter of the horse," commanded Wood, sternly. "Do you think I've come here to squander time over that? You've merely wasted your own breath, and accused yourself of more meanness than I could have possibly thought you capable."

"Well, I haven't done nothin' against you, anyhow, have I, Mr. Wood?" whined Dummy. "And besides, I can't see," he added defiantly, "as it's anybody's business to go nosin' around the country findin' out whether citizens is desirable or undesirable."

"You have assumed," answered Wood, coldly, ignoring the quickly suppressed outbreak and its personal note of vituperation, "the support of justice, and, therefore, I shall be obliged to remind you that there are offenses," he paused significantly, while Dumford shifted his position uneasily, "which the law does not overlook."

"Suspicion's one thing," muttered the man, sullenly, "and provin's yet another."

"I never indulge in suspicion," responded Wood, curtly, "although I sometimes draw conclusions from facts."

"Would you mind mentionin' a few of them facts, Mr. Wood?" asked Dummy, with assumed meekness.

"About two months ago," said Richard Wood, carelessly, arranging himself comfortably against a background of gay Indian blankets that had been heaped upon a low settee, "it came to my knowledge, quite by

accident, that a twenty-seven-thousand dollar gold bar from the 'Old Rajah Mine' had been sent to one of the banks, with the request that it be forwarded to the San Francisco Mint."

"That might be interestin', Mr. Wood," commented Dummy, as he rearranged his stock of Mexican filigree with an elaborate preoccupation that was not lost upon the man who watched him narrowly, "if it wasn't fer the fact that it happens most every day, don't it?"

"It was consigned to us," continued Richard Wood, ignoring the interruption, "by a man who explained that the bar was the result of a recent 'clean-up of the 'Old Rajah,' which had come into his hands in the course of trade."

"Which was perfectly reasonable, wasn't it, Mr. Wood?" demanded the other, suddenly off guard.

"It might have been," replied Wood, quietly, "except for the fact that this particular bar bore a faint sign, under the stamp which identified it with the express company, as a brick stolen from the —— stage near —— about three years ago."

"You don't say, Mr. Wood?" exclaimed the curio-dealer, with a well-feigned surprise that almost equaled the shrewd candor with which he continued. "Of course I know what your drivin' at, an' I'm only too glad you've give me the chance to explain."

"That bar, Mr. Wood, was traded off here, by a drummer feller, in exchange fer a valuable consignment of Navajo blankets which has already been sent East. I can't jest recollect the man's name, but that can be looked up later. The fool told me he had just

come from up that way where he'd bought the brick outright fer cash—as a curiosity to take back home—but, havin' got into a blue funk about bein' robbed, he said he'd like mighty well to get it off his hands, here."

"Plausible," rejoined Wood, coolly. "I have had, however, a rather detailed acount of the manner in which the bar was originally obtained, and I happen to know that a prominent part in the robbery was taken by a character called"—— Richard Wood paused significantly—"Apache Sam."

Without failing to notice Dummy's sudden start at the unexpected mention of the name, Wood went on steadily.

"This person was, for a long time, thought to be merely a bad and clever Indian, but later developments have discovered him as the daring leader of a band of desperadoes each member of which has defied capture for years."

"An' why, Mr. Wood," asked Dummy with well-assumed indifference, "air you tellin' all this to me?"

"Because," said Richard Wood, directly, "I have an idea that you might be able to get a message from the authorities to this same Apache Sam."

"Which is?" asked Dummy, huskily, clearing his throat.

"Which is to the effect that by placing in the hands of the law sufficient evidence to bring his accomplices to justice—the entire band, you understand—the man himself will be allowed to escape punishment, providing," added Wood, gravely, "providing that he

leave the Territory at once, with the distinct understanding that he never shall return."

"And in no way admittin'," rejoined Dumford, with a cunning leer, "in no way admittin', Mr. Wood, that I'd be able to get in touch with this here character—but jest as a little matter of interestin' speculation, you understand—'spose Apache Sam refused to throw up all the cards er to show his own hand—let us say—without seein' a few of them proofs against him which the law perfesses to hold."

"I rather thought," said Wood quietly, "that you would ask just that question and, therefore, I came prepared."

Dumford eyed Richard Wood admiringly. He worshiped astuteness even in an opponent, and it was the weakness of the man to judge the strength of an antagonist by that measure of acute comprehension which was displayed in the reading of his own character.

Interestedly, therefore, he continued to watch Wood, who drew from his pocket an envelope and deliberately selected therefrom a soiled clipping from a Tucson paper. It had been cut with a wide margin, upon which were scribbled in a peculiar hand the words: "Smithers delayin' things some, but here goes fer moonlight Saturday," and, by some strange chance, the part of a yellow mailing stamp that bore the name of Sunshine had not been torn away.

"This," said Wood, lightly, "was dropped by Apache Sam on the night of Saturday, July ——, on the desert

near ——. The handwriting is considered by experts identical with that of a letter now in the possession of the —— Bank, which bears (as this does not) a signature. Also," he added, pleasantly, as soon as the man (by whom this telltale scrap of paper was picked up) handed it to me we traced to its source the original telegram, of which this"—— and he indicated the clipping between his fingers, is an exact copy."

"But," interrupted Dumford, moistening his dry lips, "how about this here Smithers? Ain't there some point in the use of that name?"

"In this connection," replied Wood, and he watched the other keenly as he went on, "the name was evidently used as a decoy, to divert suspicion, it is believed, from the man who sent the telegram from —— unsigned.

"Smithers, otherwise Fowler, was even then regarded with doubt in certain sections of the Territory, and the writer of this message evidently had no scruples in making the gentlemanly bandit a scapegoat for crimes of another nature than those usually laid at his door."

"But," interposed Dumford, whose strenuous thinking had been manifested by heavily knitted brows, "even grantin', Mr. Wood, that the man that sent the wire and him that wrote the letter to your bank *is* one and the same, I can't see how you find any connection between him and this here outlaw—Apache Sam. As fer this scrap of paper bein' in the Injun's possession, that might be pure accident, you know."

"True," replied Wood; "through these things alone identification could not have been established. And I

have not yet mentioned the fact that a certain physical peculiarity of the outlaw was observed by the man who secured this clipping." There was a gentle firmness in the words of Richard Wood. His eyes had been looking squarely into Dummy's own, but now their glance dropped lightly to the hand whose grotesque deformity the man was wont to emphasize by crude gesticulation.

"The significance of this point will be clear," he continued, evenly, without appearing to notice the precipitancy with which Dummy found a transparent excuse for pocketing the offending member, "when I tell you that the same person who witnessed the robbery had observed a like deformity about a certain man whom he had seen in conversation with Fowler on the platform at —— several days prior to the hold-up; also that" (Richard Wood paused significantly), "Fowler was heard to address this man by name."

An instant later, Richard Wood realized that the curio dealer had crept behind him with the silent movement of a panther, that an arm had been thrown about his neck, that two fierce eyes were glaring down into his own, and then upon his forehead he felt the chilling pressure of cold steel.

Intuitively he understood that the man was in the throes of one of those mad moments of passion that transcend reason. Argument would prove useless and to attempt to escape must mean certain death. Already the hammer had been pulled back and when it fell—for a shuddering second the lovely face that swam before his vision blotted all else from consciousness and

then, suddenly through the passionate strength of the emotion, he recognized a new-born impulse for life.

Swiftly both hands went up—for there was but the long chance of a hope—and while the right grasped blindly for the weapon, the thumb of the left, with the surer reckoning of instinct, was pressed under the menacing trigger just as the hammer fell.

The danger that had loomed so large was passed, and Richard Wood was remarking gravely, as he toyed with the six-shooter that rested harmlessly upon his knee:

"That was hardly clever of you, Dummy. Your case no longer rested with me, and anything like this, you know, might have made things harder—for you."

"Well, what's the odds?" rejoined the other, with the surly defiance of spent fury. "The game's up, ain't it, and why should I give a damn fer the consequences?"

"Only because," responded Wood with gentle irony, "you have a unique reputation as a 'Knight of the Road,' who has yet to kill his man, and that at least has counted to your credit."

"It's no more nor a question of taste," answered Dummy, honest for the first time in his life, "I've always hated bloodshed—the hauntin' horror of murder is my one weakness, an'"—— after a long pause, during which he stared shamefacedly at his boots, "I'd like to thank you, Mr. Wood, fer savin' me from playin' the fool jest now." He jerked his thumb toward the low settee as though the embyronic tragedy still lurked there. "You're the kind that's square, sir," he

added, suddenly, as he looked up, and for the first time faced Wood steadily, "an' so I'm not afeered to trust myself in your hands."

"Your confidence," returned Wood gravely, "shall not be misplaced."

"As I have already said, the Territorial authorities insist upon your leaving a country which you have made notorious through those frequent hold-ups, cattle rustlings, and so forth, that adorn the columns of newspapers. They have decided that such property as you have acquired legitimately will not be confiscated, and, therefore, you are to be allowed a stated time in which to dispose of it, after you have given sufficient information to insure the complete demoralization of your band of outlaws and the capture of its individual members; I think I need not add," he continued, smiling, "that you have been too leniently dealt with to treasure up any ill will against the Territory."

"So fur as this here blasted collection of counties is concerned, I'm free to confess that I won't give a durn fer it after I am gone, but I guess I can see where my thanks is due, and what's more, I don't ferget."

His sagacious nod and slow wink were unmistakable. He had conceived for Wood that pathetic loyalty which is discovered sometimes in the morally "halt," for whom blind allegiance is often a surer guide than the maimed principles of their professed superiors in ethics. "So if there's anything," added Dummy, with a certain new dignity, "that I can ever do fer *you,* Mr. Wood, I hope you'll be sure to let me know."

"Thank you," responded Wood with frank simplic-

ity, "I shouldn't be at all surprised if you might help me out, some day and, by the way," he added, with sudden recollection, "you asked me the last time I was in A—— to look at a prospect you had for sale—I hardly think I need to ask," and he smiled with the keen insight of an habitual reader of men, "if your title deeds are clear? Shall we look over the property today?"

"An' do you think, Mr. Wood," asked the other with unfeigned admiration, "that after all this I'd be invitin' you to git dropped into a hole ten feet deep in a lonely spot with me at the top aholdin' the rope—fer the sake of sellin' a mine? No, sir; I'd never do it, though I know," he added ruefully, "that the claim won't bring me as much in any other way."

"Nevertheless we will go," said Richard Wood, rising as he returned the pistol to its owner, and then he remarked, quietly: "The anger of a moment is well forgotten, and besides," he added, with that humorous smile of understanding which was the secret of his power over many men, "this Dumford, I think, is no man's fool."

"Thankee, Mr. Wood," responded the curio dealer with solemn fervor, "once more, sir, thankee."

CHAPTER XVII.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;
With that wild wheel we go not up or down; * * *
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;
For man is man and master of his fate.

"JUST one month, two weeks, three days, four hours and fifteen minutes ago," began Richard Wood, calmly, studying his watch, "I saw you for the first time, and now"—— he spoke in a minor key that thrilled, with a low and winning note, but otherwise his manner was as quiet and self-contained as though he were requesting the pleasure of a dance.

"And now?" she repeated questioningly, in naïve preparedness for an ordinary remark.

"And now," he leaned toward her slightly, and the words when they came were very clear, "I am going to ask you to be my wife."

"Oh!" and the quick intake of her breath hinted at Elizabeth Treverin's surprise. "Why did you do it this way?"

"I was afraid you would be startled," he replied gently, "but I still believe I was right."

"Such precipitancy!" she exclaimed reproachfully, "and from you!"

"Would you not rather understand from the beginning," he demanded, gravely, "exactly how I feel?"

"But one could not be certain of one's feelings," she objected, quickly, "in a month. More time is required for that."

"I have been quite sure of what I wanted," he answered, simply, "from the first."

"Although you must acknowledge that you do not half know me, as yet." Her tone was decidedly sceptical.

"Don't I?" he asked, and she wondered at his enigmatical smile. "I warn you not to examine me too far. The subject is one to which I have been applying myself pretty studiously of late."

Her laugh was deliciously merry, although he did not fail to detect through it a troubled note of doubt.

"Ah, but you have been 'cramming,'" she cried, gayly, "and such work is foolishly superficial; it doesn't get beneath the surface at all."

"Barbara wouldn't have made that remark," he said, gravely. "It sounds more like Elizabeth."

She caught her breath again. "I think you *have* been studying," she said slowly. "And you seem"—quite gravely she added it—"to read me rather well."

"Do I?" he asked, with frank pleasure. "That is decidedly encouraging."

"But I did not mean to be encouraging at all," she said, quickly. "In fact. you ought to be told at once that there isn't the slightest ground for hope."

"Suppose I absolve you from all responsibility in the matter of how it is to end. Couldn't you promise to let

yourself go, and allow the current to take you where it will? I'm almost sure that I could win Barbara, and there are times," his voice was vibrant with suppressed emotion and she dared not meet the challenge in his eyes, "there are times when I know that I shall master Elizabeth."

"Please," and she shivered slightly as she threw out her hands with a little pleading gesture of entreaty, "don't be so intense. I wish," she added passionately, "how I wish that you had not spoiled our friendship. For it *had* grown to be *friendship*. I acknowledge *that*, and it is far from usual for me to call any one friend after an acquaintance of six weeks, even though," and there was a ripple of laughter in the troubled voice, "you have managed to make the conditions more than favorable.

"I think the singular intimacy of the relation was possible," she went on slowly, thinking aloud, as if, for the first time, she were explaining the situation to herself, "only because of our having so many vital points of contact. Your loyal affection for my father—those beautiful memories of my mother, the—our common interest in Jack—these are the intangible sympathies that have drawn us together, and yet when we do not even know that we have a single tradition in common, when we have not thought whether our tastes are at all similar, you have the temerity to suggest marriage. And for the sake of a very doubtful experiment you have been willing to risk a delightfully safe friendship."

She had spoken with the deliberate frankness that a

woman sometimes mistakes for logic, and the undercurrent of amusement in her tone showed him that she had accepted her own explanation of the obvious as a convincing argument that must appeal to reason.

"You have accused me," he began gravely, "of spoiling our friendship." He raised his eyebrows with a curious little smile, and she wondered, for a moment why he passed so lightly over the other things she had said.

"Don't you think that I shall be able to preserve what I recognize as my only clue?"

"Clue?" she asked, doubtfully.

"And why not?" he demanded, smiling. "If you insist upon repudiating everything but friendship, then friendship, for the present, shall be my guide."

"Ah," she said with relief, "that means you are willing to maintain the *status quo.*"

"Certainly," he replied, gravely. "Did you fear that I had any thought of making love to you—now?"

"You have always been so considerate—so—reliably impersonal," she rejoined quickly, "and that was why" —— she hesitated.

"You had counted on my not being troublesome," and he laughed softly to himself, "like some of the rest."

"I believe," he continued seriously, "that I was prepared for this verdict, although even now I have a conviction, which may seem presumptuous—that the case will be won on appeal. I promise, however, to give you all the time you want while the suit is pending."

"You are generous," she murmured, with light irony, "for an advocate."

"It is because I realize," he responded, with a judicial smile, "that the situation is difficult. Barbara might have been able to care with the splendid simplicity of a large and noble nature, but Elizabeth is ever on guard. Elizabeth will not permit the slightest shortening of the conventional novitiate. Does she believe, I wonder, that the ability to comprehend a subtle harmony can only be acquired by running the whole gamut of technical sound?"

"Are you entirely just to Elizabeth?" she asked, accepting his descriptive phraseology of herself with a direct simplicity that caught his fancy. "And do you imagine that the deeper feeling—if it ever became a fact—could endure the test of years unless there were a mutual capacity for friendship?"

"But you cannot eliminate primitive impulse," he responded quickly, "and all human attraction is intuitive whether it be mental, spiritual, physical, or the finest blending of the three."

"And yet is instinct—even in a woman—entirely trustworthy? One would almost think," she added merrily, "that you (of all men) might believe in affinity."

"Wasn't it 'affinity,'" he asked, smiling, "that Mr. Travers defined as 'the art of agreement and the science of discord?'"

"Did he?" with a flash of laughter. "That was rather clever, I think."

They were silent for a moment, breathing in the warm beauty of a starless night that shut them away from

those vast spaces of impenetrable mystery which man has called "the desert." The monotonous singing of the rails drowned all other sound from without, and subdued to a distant murmur the voices that came to them now and then through the open door of the car. The girl's face was in shadow, but the profile of the man, outlined strongly against the light, held a certain determining note of power, and it was he, finally, who spoke.

"I have never analyzed my feeling for you," he said, gently. "When it came, it was complete—like patriotism or ambition or any other of the big passions of life. The only difference seemed to be," he continued thoughtfully, "that through the others a man always finds himself, while in this," he paused tentatively, "in this—I somehow realized—*you.*"

There was a fine tenderness in his voice and it held her sympathies with its note of appeal.

"I begin to understand," and her words came to him softly through the darkness that concealed her face, "I think I *know* now, why you have been generous enough not to be hurt. Love"—— there was a little catch in her voice and then it lingered shyly on the word, "I think, is invulnerable; it is only vanity that can be wounded."

"You must not believe," she continued, slowly, with a sweet sincerity that clothed her words with charm, "because I have been so elaborately practical" (and for a moment she recovered the tolerant humor with which she sometimes viewed her more serious self), "that I

deny a very decided''—— she hesitated for a better word and then used ''interest.''

''You have attracted me—immensely—from the first, because your life is big and full; broader in its inspiration, more fascinating in its scope, than the lives of most of the men I have known. Sometimes there—in our little world—we have a dangerous tendency for peering through the wrong end of the telescope, and I think''—in a low voice—''that knowing you—has made —me—look—the other way.''

She had risen, and, bracing herself against a darkened window, caught the swaying motion of the train. Her eyes followed the vanishing rails, which fled away into the blackness along an ever shining pathway of light. Even the few visible yards of illuminated steel reminded her eloquently of a single phase of that splendid achievement which made her admire this man of action.

''One can see,''she continued,more slowly,''how much you think of it all—this country, which has so grown into your life that it claims the highest allegiance from brain and heart. Suppose,'' and her voice dropped to a key so low, that he barely caught the meaning of the words from where he stood looking down upon her, through the darkness, ''suppose I were incapable of such—loyalty to a—cause.''

''I know my own mind,'' he said, gravely, ''and I believe I could fathom—yours.''

''But you must listen,'' she began eagerly. ''It is necessary to explain, because I think you must have overestimated me always. My temperament, I believe,

is sympathetic, but the capacity for being moved by things that are beautiful and ideas that are great is—in me—I fear, only a sort of artistic appreciation.

"The sentiment of your attiude toward the Territory thrills me, but should I be able to endure a test of the fact? It is like the fervor of pure worship that demands a principle of surrender; and there are not always the subtle odors of incense, the heavenly strains of music, the soft lights filtering through stained glass, to create an atmosphere for devotion. No, please—let me finish. I know, without your saying it, that you would not try to confine my life to your interests any more than I could bear to narrow yours to the limits of my own; but I should *want* to be with you, heart and soul. My pride would glory in the fact that you could not change, and yet do you not see that all this might be true where the imagination is fired with a mere passion for the idea, while the mind is still unsatisfied and the heart remains untouched?"

Her tone had changed, and there was a poignant note of appeal in the voice that pleaded for comprehension. Outlined dimly in the shadows, as she was, he could not see her face. He had only her words to guide him, and as they melted away into the night he wondered if she also were slipping from him through the fog of conjecture, the gloom of mysticism. He knew that his moment had arrived, and he realized vaguely that his only hope lay in some force that would set her pulses throbbing in spite of the fine reserves of a nature as yet unwon.

Suddenly, she felt a strong hand laid lightly upon

either shoulder, and in spite of its extreme delicacy there was an iron firmness in the arresting touch. His voice when it came was low and stern, but it drew her with the subtle magnetism of veiled power.

"Even if I agreed in this exaggerated view of your personal limitations, do you think I should hesitate about taking the risk? Do you imagine for a moment that I will give you up? Can you really believe that I shall ever change? Reasons hardly count and theories have no weight, for I'm going to make you love me—Elizabeth—as madly as I love you."

His use of the vital word, deliberate and thrilling when it came, was a sudden revelation of profound passion. Accentuated by the wilder fervor of the adverb, it revealed in a flash the magnificent restraint with which until now he had held himself beyond the impulsive ardor of a more concrete expression. It was this virility of soul that wrested the veil at last from the inner sanctuary of her emotions, and for the first time she felt the warm appeal of his personality, the compelling force of his will. She found herself awed and strangely shaken as in the presence of some new and terrible experience, and the sensation filled her with a vague alarm, a tremulous prescience of destiny.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"O Iole! how did you know that Hercules was a god?"

"Because," answered Iole, "I was content the moment my eyes fell on him. When I beheld Theseus, I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot-race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood, or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did. * * * Half his strength he put not forth."

"I SAY, Wood," and a shadow darkened the doorway, "everybody's asking when we're due at Phœnix."

"At ten-thirty," rejoined Wood, as he came forward to meet Travers in the light.

"What was the game, Bobby, and how did you come out?" asked Miss Treverin, with sudden interest.

"Bridge, in which I never speculate," responded Travers, laconically. He had a virtuous way of dignifying his personal indifference for the game into a jaunty pharisaism that amused the girl.

"You might have to if you lived in Arizona," she rejoined, mischievously. "From what Mr. Wood has been telling me I imagine the stakes are often pretty high here; in fact, one might gamble shockingly at bridge in the Territory."

"Bravo!" cried Wood, laughing. "Miss Treverin means," apparently, he explained for the benefit of the mystified Travers, but in reality he was more than conscious of his own keen pleasure in his growing ability

to translate her even in so small a matter, "Miss Treverin means that a big wash-out, in the rainy season, scores rather heavily against the railroads. I think," and his eyes laughed, "that she must be referring to bridge repairs on the Gila."

"I've been learning," finished the girl, merrily, and her flash of responsive understanding brought him a sudden exhilaration of spirit, "how a respectably shallow stream can grow into a torrent that tears away girders with other artificial things, and how Nature in Arizona sometimes wins the rubber."

"Great Scott!" groaned Travers, completely in the dark as to any meaning that might lay behind this superabundance of metaphor. "The night grows luminous in spite of the fact that I see no stars—beg pardon, Elizabeth, but *you're* completely out of sight, you know."

"Bobby, if this is slang, it ought to make one blush, and, as a sign of *extreme* displeasure, I'm going away, to put on my hat."

"And to think," exclaimed Travers, solemnly, "that *you* should have indulged in a pun! No wonder the pure font of *my* speech grows muddy."

"Mr. Wood," called Mrs. Winston, as she caught sight of that gentleman near the door, "aren't we just getting into Phœnix?" And Wood excusing himself hastily, joined her inside the car.

"I'll allow you to go, *ma belle cousine,*" smiled Travers, as he barred the door with his arm, "when you've deigned to answer a question of grave moment."

"Please, Bobby," she implored, with smiling eyes.

"Now tell me," he persisted, "weren't you most awfully glad to shake the dust of Echino from those obstinate little feet that persisted in leading a loyal and devoted cousin into most frightfully 'narrow ways.'"

"I believe," she answered demurely, "that you invited yourself to come."

"Naturally, because where thou goest I would go, also—and *there*—have I been buried."

"But most of the people are delightfully clever and cultivated," she argued.

"Is it 'clever and cultivated' to be intoxicated with one's own ideas?" he demanded sarcastically.

"You're far more clever and cultivated yourself, sir," she retorted, with mock severity, "than you would like us to believe. Didn't I catch you reading 'The Clouds' the other day?" and her eyes danced.

"Of course you did, because the confounded nonsense of that place was enough to drive a man—to anything. Besides, Aristophanes describes the Olympians more than well—almost as though the old fellow had met some of them in the flesh."

"What *could* he have said about *us,*" and she laughed wickedly as she read his annoyance at her choice of a pronoun, "so very long ago."

"'Us,' indeed!" sniffed Travers, scornfully. "You are one of the few women I know who can be individual without descending to eccentricity, but don't carry a strong point too far."

"I promise not to, Monsieur Bobby, if you will tell me what Aristophanes could possibly have said that is apropos of modern life."

"It is in that scene, don't you know, where an Athenian, blasè and world-weary, visits the 'thinking shop' of Socrates, and finds the philosophical old gentleman 'holding subtle disputation with the rafters' from which he hangs suspended in his basket. The dialogue is rich enough in comedy to make a vaudeville audience laugh, but the part that applies best here and makes one realize how little there is after all that is really new under the sun, is that brief monologue in which Socrates, caricatured into a sophist, says (after Frère's translation, not mine):

" 'I never could have found out things divine
Had I not hung my mind up thus and mixed
My subtle intellect with its kindred air.
Had I regarded such things from below,
I had learnt nothing. For the earth absorbs
Into itself the moisture of the brain—
It is the very same case with water-cresses.'

And the Athenian stranger replies, "Dear me! so water-cresses grow by thinking!"

"Good!" cried the girl, clapping her hands, softly. " 'Subtle intellect' is delicious and 'mixed with kindred air,' the very essence of wit. I'm awfully obliged to you, Bobby, for putting a heedless modern in touch with the classics, and I shall never garden again without remembering that 'watercresses grow by thinking.' "

"You're keen enough on the point," laughed Travers, gayly. "In fact, your attitude almost amounts to the confession that I'm trying so hard to extort; now, tell me (his tone was wheedling), haven't you been horribly bored? Swanson may be a poet and all that, I'll acknowledge that those sonnets to an Indian princess are the most idyllic love poems I've ever struck, but can you understand how a man who could write like that would finally come to living out this sort of thing? There is life in what he *says,* but one feels the artificiality of pose in what he *does,* and no wonder a wide-awake world has little patience with Paul Swanson's follies."

"But Mr. Swanson *lived* those poems," she flashed out at him indignantly, and then paused abruptly, wondering if she were the only person who knew about that early marriage of which Paul Swanson had spoken, but once. If Travers had not heard that the sonnets were written to a real woman who had been their author's wife, then the fact must have been told to Elizabeth Treverin in confidence, and why should Paul Swanson have imparted to *her* the soul-stirring history of a life which he had made beautiful for one glorious year—of a death which had left him with a sheaf of wonderful memories that were made into verse, to be read some day by the somber eyes of this woman's child?

There was an element of tragedy in the story, and the originality of Swanson's genius could so enhance the value of a dramatic situation that it became one quivering heart-throb. Moreover, there was a certain

intellectual fascination in the complexity of the human problem which tempted her imagination.

"Beware of the man with a romantic past, *ma chere cousine,*" rejoined Travers, with easy banter. "Romance may appeal to the imagination, but it doesn't always pan out as beatifically as one expects."

Beneath all of his levity was Travers trying to warn her? Had he detected in Swanson's attitude toward herself a deeper meaning than she had yet realized?

"You are right, I think, Bobby," she answered with a thoughtful gravity that showed him how surely his bow "drawn at a venture" had sent an arrow home: but "romance could never appeal where the ideals remained unsatisfied, and it is only when coupled with completeness of character that an interesting past becomes a peril to the fancy."

Richard Wood was in her mind, and almost unconsciously she found the distinction which marked his difference from the other man. The one could never make a larger appeal to her than that inspired by poetic sentiment, while the other with characteristic brevity and force had already begun to get a grip upon her life. Without analyzing its significance she suddenly realized the fact. It was a moment of self-knowledge, a glimpse of personal revelation, and, with the light full upon her face, Travers could see how swiftly her color came and went.

With the easy tact of habitual courtesy he changed the subject quickly, not by the abrupt introduction of a new topic, but rather through a lighter treatment of the same vein of thought.

"Acknowledge, 'honest Injun,' Queen Bet—as one used to put it when a boy—that nothing but ennui drove you to Echino Springs, and promise that you'll never go back. Do you remember how I used to make you do things in the days before we grew up? What a frightful little bully I was!" and Travers chuckled reminiscently while his eyes twinkled merrily.

"I haven't forgotten," and she smiled indulgently, "that you always insisted upon getting your own way, and, unfortunately, you are not quite yet over that habit, I think."

"I could frighten anything out of you then," continued Travers, jovially, "by threatening to marry you some day, and you can't imagine what sport it was, Elizabeth, to hear you read the riot act and to make you declare as you stamped your foot, that you'd always do just as you pleased."

"I remember," she laughed, "that your strongest argument was summed up in a scornful demand as to whether I had even known a real grown-up man who failed to get exactly what he wanted to have."

"And your experience of the genus homo, not being then as broad as it is now, backed up my logic."

"You ruled like a small tyrant."

"And you obeyed like a little trump, but always on condition, always on condition, Queen Bet, that I'd let you off from paying the penalty of that dreadful threat."

"To think," she exclaimed with mock contrition, "that I stooped to bribe! But then," and her face brightened hopefully, "the single ray of light on my

very sad case is the fact that I had not yet learned to reason."

"Since then, Queen Bet, since then, *ma chere,*" and Travers' sigh had an undercurrent of something deeper than nonsense, "the tables have indeed turned and things are quite the other way. Bribery left me triumphant, but reason has pronounced me vanquished."

"Aren't you going," asked the girl gently, "aren't you going to let me get my hat?"

"Not," said Travers, his tone changing as he dropped the jocose manner which he usually maintained, "not until you've told me, Queen Bet, whether time isn't making it worth while for a man to hope."

"Don't, Bobby, please," and she withdrew the hand which he was attempting to seize, "we've settled that question so many times, and you're such a comfort as you are—a perfect treasure of a friend."

"Not that, thank you, Queen Bet," and he laughed softly, as he patted the recaptured fingers, "I'm never to be included in the sad army of recruits whom you call by the name of friend. Deny me the privileges of a lover and I insist upon my rights as a cousin." He raised the hand that he held and drew it lightly across his cheek, until the cool palm rested against the warm breath of his lips; then restored it with the finest chivalry of his race. "You may go now, little girl," he said gently. "There are the lights of Phœnix, and I think—you want your hat."

CHAPTER XIX.

"When each the other shall avoid,
Shall each by each be most enjoyed."

It was a mild December afternoon in the late nineties, and the repose of Christmas reigned over Queen Elizabeth.

A faint breath of smoke, drifting lazily from the huge black stacks whence volumes of sulphurous clouds were wont to issue, furnished silent testimony to that palpitating quiescence which marks the rest of slumbering energies.

In the absence of all usual sound the intense stillness could be felt, and almost unconsciously one listened through a strange hush for the dull roar of the smelters, for the incessant grinding and crushing and pounding of mills, or even for the audible panting of some distant furnace blast.

Like a lusty young giant the thriving city had sprawled over rugged mountains, stretched long arms down the entire length of the canyon, and was reaching far out over the broad mesa beyond. The ten years that had elapsed from the first conception of the thought to the final birth of the idea had wrought many changes in Queen Elizabeth—changes whose ultimate achievement had attracted the attention of a world al-

ready interested in the wonderful mining camps of the Southwest. But how many of those who look on appreciate the faith for development and perseverance in execution which characterize such an enterprise from its earliest beginnings, endowing judgment with an almost prophetic foresight? How many understand that the carrying out of a dream is as nothing to its inception in the brain of an originator, who fathers the created thing even before it has been given the form of actual realization?

The monumental significance of Queen Elizabeth, however, was a sentiment that would appeal to few persons who looked out upon her concentrated activities. Any suggestion of the ideal, indeed, would have seemed strangely out of harmony, no doubt, with the drilling, the blasting, and the tearing that were demonstrating through practical results the vital secrets of the eternal hills, but beyond the noise, the smoke and the turmoil, far across vast plains of intervening space, loomed the clearer beauty of her far horizon, like a rare atmosphere of sentiment for the undimmed star of truth.

"I wonder what the old boss would say if he could see things as they are today."

The Baron was again talking, and one noted in him that peculiar relish for reminiscence which is the surest sign of age. Pacing up and down in front of the picturesque little hotel, whose quaint mission architecture was perched high aloft on a steep hillside, the Baron commanded a superb view of his surroundings—a view which evidently inspired retrospect.

"I remember as if it was yesterday that stormy night he died, and to think that it's his daughter Dick Wood has brung down here today."

The Baron's listener, a youth with journalistic tendencies, was too palpably absorbed in the present to spare much sympathy for the past, and there was a touch of professional "business" in his manner of handling the old man that made the worthy veteran more stubbornly prolix.

"There was to have been some function, I understood, in honor of this daughter of the late Treverin," put in the reporter, insinuatingly.

"Queen Elizabeth through the Looking Glass," was the heading of that news column to which he devoted his talents, and, since gossip had become for the moment the *métier* by means of which he aspired to local fame, the reporter could scent a social item from afar.

"Of course there's to be a function," returned the Baron sententiously, "the biggest thing I've ever heard tell of happenin' in these diggins' but you can understand that I've been told to keep mum, Mr. Muggins."

"Surprise, I suppose," hinted Muggins, "although things look mighty quiet around here, Baron," and he glanced meaningly toward the hotel. "The clerk up there informed me that the manager, as well as pretty much the whole force, were taking a day off, and I couldn't get anything beyond an everyday dinner if it *is* Christmas."

"Day off!" sniffed the Baron scornfully, "I guess they never had a bigger day on; but your right in think-

in' that there ain't goin' to be no dinin' an' winin' up *there.*"

"Indeed?" and the inflection of Muggins suggested many meanings the most patent of which was, perhaps, doubt. "So it's to be a dinner, then? Now the question is, *where?*" thought Muggins, but he only said: "I've been rather wondering, Baron, why *you* came to be sent down to Queen Elizabeth from the Springs."

"Because," and the Baron's air of importance was a pleasant thing to see, "I happen to be one of the few which can find their way through the earliest workings of this here mine, and an inspection of some abandoned diggins' is to be made."

"Most visitors are interested in the latest modern equipments," said Muggins.

"And most visitors is *not* the old boss' daughter," responded the Baron, with a triumphant flourish of emphasis on the point that had aroused so slight an interest in Muggins.

"But if you were sent down here to show this party through the mine, why are you above ground now?" demanded Muggins, with a sly intent of suddenly forcing the Baron's hand. "They went down fully an hour ago."

"While I was sent up to have a bite at the hotel, after which I'm to join them in the mine," rejoined the Baron with impressive slowness and the coolness of one who understands thoroughly the principle of exciting interest through prolonging suspense.

"I should think they would have finished by that time," returned Muggins, with a lofty air. "You surely

must have gotten mixed in your dates somewhere, Baron. Maybe it was changing time at Phœnix," added the reporter, facetiously.

"Now, young man, look here," said the Baron solemnly, "ain't you heered yet that I'm known all over the Territory as the only one that can make an appointment and keep it in Phœnix?"

"And how do you do it, Baron?" asked the reporter good-naturedly, playing to the old man's egoism.

"Well," said the Baron, "seein' as I'm the fortunate possessor of three watches, each of which has been received, Mr. Muggins, as a testimonial for ability in my own line," he added impressively, "I jest keep them all agoin' at once, and each one set at a different time when I happen to be in Phœnix. Here's the watch fer ketchin' trains South," and the Baron drew a huge, old-fashioned chronometer from one pocket; "and here's the little friend that helps me out when I'm booked fer the North," he explained, and he displayed proudly a child's dainty watch, which "had been conferred by its owner. "This here is 'old faithful,' my dinner-bell that I always set by the big clock in the ——Hotel at Phœnix."

The Baron was about to re-pocket the last timepiece, which was a specimen of the ordinary Waterbury variety, when Muggins interrupted.

"That's a curious collection, Baron—the big, old-fashioned thing, especially. How did you come by it?"

"That watch was given to me," said the Baron, plunging into his tale with the eager haste of one to

whom the art of talking is a distinct pleasure, "that was given to me by the manager of a travelin' company of actors that came to —— in the seventies. He said it was meant as a token of friendship and fer bravery in action.

"You wouldn't believe, I guess, Mr. Muggins, that the plays of Shakespeare could be awful popular in a rough-and-tumble mining camp, but it was a fact, I tell you, that 'Julius Cæsar' took mighty well—playin' every night straight fer two weeks to a full house. But the last day, after the handbills had been posted and the tickets sold, the man that played the part of Cæsar jest up and got sick, an' the manager was so cut up about it that I offered to help him out. He didn't wait long to accept my services, you can just bet, seein' as I was the only feller in town that was tall enough to look decent in that there gaudy lookin' purple calico rig called a Roman too-gay, and when I got the thing on with all the other fixins' of the outfit that went with it, there was an American an awful lot too-gay, you can imagine.

"But the rehearsal was goin' on by that time, an' I had to keep an' eye out sharp to avoid trompin' all over the blasted skirts of the thing when I moved across that durned stage. I was confused enough as it was, fer jest after I got all dressed up the manager rushed up an' says, 'of course you know your lines, my dear Baron, but I want to show you one or two cuts—our special improvement on the original,' he says, winkin' his weather eye. 'Old Bill *S.* didn't make all of his

pints quite sharp enough fer a cow-puncher's wit,' he added laughin', 'an' I hear we're goin' to have a house full of wild boys tonight!'

"'Lines, nothin,' I answered, sort of scared, 'who said I knew my lines?'

"'D'ye mean to say,' he asked, lookin' blank, 'that you've never learned the part?'

"'Of course not,' I responds, eyein' him scornful-like, 'never heard of it till you-all come to town, but haven't I been here every night *since,* and can't a feller catch on in that time? I know what's *done* an' I can give the *sense* of everything which is *said.* What more would you want?' says I.

"'And may heaven help us,' sez he, 'but we've got to get through with it now,' and with that we ups and begins.

"Well, even the manager was surprised, when he seen that I done so well. Of course, there was times when I didn't know exactly what to say, but I got over them by jest rarin' up my head an' lookin' grand, and that kind of actin' took fine with the cow-boys in the evenin'. The manager was awful worried at the way I expressed myself in the scene betwixt Cæsar and his wife in their palace (when it's thunderin' and lightnin' outside), but some folks thought my way of sayin' things a heap better than Shakespeare's, seein' I was short and got straight to the point. I never could remember the real words, but what I said was somethin' like this:

"'Hell, but it's rainin' outside and Cally's called

murder three times in her sleep. Fer heaven's sake, who's there?' "

"But by far the most excitin' part of my experience happened durin' the evenin' performance in that part of the play where Cæsar goes to Congress, and as soon as he saw Brutus there the two of them begun jawin' back and forth, until finally Cæsar asks, kind of scornful:

" 'Hey, Brutus, what d'ye mean by kneelin' there in yer socks?' (an' by the way, Mr. Muggins, I never could see the pint of that remark, for Brutus was wearin' heavier boots than any man on the stage).

"But to go on with my story: At that remark of Cæsar another feller, I ferget his name, but he was some old pal of Brutus', jumps to his feet with an angry snort, draws a big knife and cries:

" 'I'll let this here (meanin' his knife) do my talkin' fer me,' and at that pint Cæsar gets stabbed, while Brutus and several others puts in their oars, or in other words, their knives. Cassidy (if I remember the name right) was one of the fiercest, bein' a lean little Roman that Cæsar hated because he wasn't fat.

"I, actin' as Cæsar, had no more than uttered those dyin' words which never did have any sense to me—you know how they go, kind of a sad sort of jeer:

" 'Seein' as how you've all et up Brutus, go ahead now; why don't you? Jest fall-to on Cæsar.'

"Well, when the cow-punchers in the back of the room heard them words they begun stampedin' like mad, and, makin' a rush for the stage, they landed right amongst us so all-fired quick that we didn't know

where we was at. They was drawin' knives and pullin' out guns, and pushin' me back kind of pertectin' like, exclaimin' all the while:

"'Jest you keep quiet, Mr. Cæsar, *we'll* do *your* fightin' fer you. We'll give these low-down curs hell, since they don't know how to play fair—all pitchin' into a man at once.'

"Well, as soon as I seen how it was, I pulled off them too-gay rags mighty durn quick, and showed them that it was all play an' how I wasn't hurt fer sure, an' that's what ended the thing without bloodshed an' won me this here watch that I call my Roman hair-loom."

"Surely, the critics would call that realism in art," commented Muggins, with a ready laugh. "And now, Baron, suppose we eat together and have a bottle of something that would make a toast to your long experience in the Territory worth while." For Muggins still had visions of forcing the Baron to divulge what was going on in the mine. He suspected something spectacular, something that might write up into a good story, and Elizabethan life, as seen "Through the Looking-Glass" had been somewhat dull of late.

In the meantime, "Richard Wood's Christmas party," as Travers called it, had been dropped by a great hydraulic hoist into a nether world along whose deserted corridors there echoed no sound of pick or drill, for the 'spirit of the day' had penetrated even to these lowest depths, driving forth from the realm of darkness every worker of the night.

"Have you noted, *ma cousine,* the festive decorations

of these magnificent lifts which are technically called hoists?" asked Travers gayly, as he helped Miss Treverin to alight, several thousand feet below the surface.

"This is a gala day for Queen Elizabeth, you know," explained Wood, "and besides we have some appreciation of the immense value of our cargoes," he added, smiling around upon the merry group that was gathered about the foot of the shaft.

"As though we didn't have a faint idea of the rich treasure that goes up in this elevator every day!" exclaimed Elizabeth Treverin, with a merry laugh.

"Wealth isn't always computed in ore. It amounted, once, to a 'goodly' pearl. 'The pearl of great price has been found,' you know, but how to possess it—ah, there's the rub, and—late tonight you are going away."

It was Richard Wood's low voice in her ear, and she knew that his rapid utterance of the brief aside thrilled her like the music of some well-remembered strain. Not once since the night when he had asked her to marry him had he referred to this subject by word or look, and she realized, now, the significance of her fear that he meant perhaps never to speak of it again.

Had *she* actually begun to care, or was it only that, in the weakness of a woman's vanity, she had been loth to believe that *he* could so easily forget? She had rather hoped that she was free from that sort of thing; she had even imagined that her head could not be turned by the mere "incense" of love, and yet—there was some subtle quality in his admiration that made it different to her, from that of others, while her own sensations defied analysis.

She was relieved that there was no time for a reply to his introduction of the dangerous topic; and still she felt a warm sense of happiness in the memory of his words, a keen pleasure, almost, in the confusion of that moment which had permitted them to be spoken.

"Do you realize," demanded Travers, who had returned to her side while Richard Wood was busying himself with the comfort of his other guests, "do you realize that down here are over a hundred miles of track, all brilliantly lighted by electricity, and as many more miles of rock-hewn galleries where a track has never been laid? Groping one's way into a silent stope seems only an idea of the romantic past, for this mine, as you see, is as bright as day."

"To think, Bobby, that you have learned so much more about it all than I know, and yet you are cruel enough to give one no hint of the surprise! Now, wouldn't you *like* to tell me," and she gave Travers the benefit of a pair of reproachful eyes, "just *where* we are going in these dear little cars?" with a dramatic wave of her hand toward the gayly bedecked ore-carriers wherein Wood was rapidly seating his guests.

"We are going," began Travers, with a mocking air of mystery, and then he caught a glimpse of her eager face, "we are going, I think, through the mine."

"Bobby!" with supreme disgust.

"To what is known," continued Travers, relenting, "as the 'Grotto of the Queen,' which lies just beyond 'Old Druid Hall.'"

"Oh," and she sighed happily, "that sounds de-

lightfully mysterious. Please tell me *all* about it."

"I commend you to Wood for particulars," and Travers laughed mischievously as that gentleman came up to assign him to his seat.

"He says you will answer all my questions," smiled the girl, as Richard Wood put her into the car and himself took the vacant place which he had reserved beside her.

"Have you been trying to coerce Mr. Travers into breaking faith with me?" and she caught the flash of laughter in his eyes.

"I'm afraid I *did* subject him to rather a strong temptation," she confessed, with a pretty little *moue* of contrition, "and the reason he refused to yield, I think, is only because this is *your* surprise."

"But all the credit for the idea, as well as the cleverness with which it has been carried out, belong to Mr. Travers," he replied quickly.

"And your part?" she smiled archly.

"My part was merely to hope that we might succeed in pleasing you," he responded simply.

"You have never failed of that," she rejoined, with shining eyes, and then more gravely, "I feel as though I were making a pilgrimage to some shrine—I wonder"—— and her voice vibrated with the suppressed emotion of an intense nature, "I wonder *why* this mine should seem to me so instinct with personality!"

"Through its workings, no doubt, as an index, you read the hopes of many men," he suggested, quietly.

"How well you understand!" her voice was one eager exclamation, "but a woman's reasoning is less in-

clusive. There is only room in *my* mind, I fear, for three of these men—the ones I have known—my father, and Jack—and—you."

"It is kind to give me some room in your mind while I wait for my place in your heart."

"Won't you keep to the subject of mining?" there was a pleading note in her voice and her eyes seemed almost afraid.

"Elizabeth," again she felt herself possessed, and carried along in the current of a passion that seemed strangely allied to inspiration, "Elizabeth, you *know* that I must not let you tell me good-bye."

"Please," but the words sounded faintly even to her ears. She knew that he almost had her at bay, and then, the car stopped with a sudden jerk. The final solitude *a deux* was over, and the last precious moments of an intermittent conversation had left Elizabeth Treverin marveling at her own reluctance to tell this man good-bye.

"Here we are, at last," shouted Travers with the assumed nonchalance of the master of ceremonies, who is just on the point of springing a sensation.

"You are about to enter," continued Travers, adopting the stentorian tones of a professional cicerone, "what is known as Druid Hall. Observe the roundness of these wooden pillars and remember that this feature is unusual, as the heavy timbering of a mine is nearly always squared. About two feet in diameter, with cap and sills, above and below, these beautiful specimens of over-grown stump are supposed to be suggestive of those natural temples of early Britain

with which you are all more or less familiar—if not in nature (above ground) let us hope, at least, through the art of that jolly opera, 'Norma.' "

"This hall is one man's idea of how to build a mine, and because of its warmth and freedom from damp or fumes; because, in other words, of its extreme 'dryness,' we have selected this portion of the property as a site for 'my lady's bower,' and Travers swept aside with a flourish the heavy draperies which curtained off a remote corner of the vaulted cavern.

Here soft rugs, long mirrors, a huge divan and well-furnished dressing-table suggested the impromptu comforts of a dainty boudoir, where palms vied with holly and mistletoe in creating an air of Christmas.

There was a chorus of delighted oh's from the ladies and surprised exclamations from the men, in the midst of which Travers cried, in a stage whisper behind his hand, "Dinner gowns not being *de rigueur,* ladies, in just ten minutes we'll return to take you in."

"And now, *mes comrades,* exit all, for we dine, you know, toward the seventh hour in the Grotto of the Queen."

"Three cheers for Bobby!" called some girlish voice, and an echo carried the words along to the rapidly vanishing group of men.

"*Mais non, ma belle,*" came the answering shout of Travers, and each word was clear. "*Vivat,* Richard of the Lion Heart. *Vive le bonhomme—Coeur de Lion.*"

Without a moment's hesitation every man, excepting Wood himself, had caught up the refrain, which went rolling down the long corridors with a cumula-

tive sonority of swelling sound until finally its deep reverberations died away and were lost in the remotest crevice of some far-away nook. And then, in a flashing second, with the delicate lightness of a silvery overtone, there floated through the quivering silence, an answering echo, a "*vive le roi,*" which had its beginning in Druid Hall.

No one seemed able afterward to remember just who was responsible for the happy thought of a pretty little tribute to their host, but somebody quoted softly, as she absently straightened her hair:

"A prince he was—of the people,
A king who ruled among men."

CHAPTER XX.

"And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapor buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark."

THE Grotto of the Queen was one of those beautiful natural caves which are to be found, sometimes, in the heart of a mine.

Hollowed out of the lime (where copper carbonates are mostly discovered) its walls bore exquisite incrustations of malachite and azurite, while stalactitic columns of colorless calcite appeared almost to support the lofty dome of its vaulted roof.

It was Travers who suggested the possible transformation of this underground retreat into a modern banqueting hall, for Travers belonged to a generation whose imagination dared much in its restless seeking for some new thing.

"What a delightfully stunning thought!" "Strikingly original idea!" and "The last word in novelty!" were exclamations that went around the table, as the

guests of Richard Wood were seated at a dinner which appeared remarkable, "only," as Mrs. Winston expressed it, "when one realized the fact that one was being served so many thousand feet below the surface."

"Long ago, or, rather, when I first met you," said Elizabeth Treverin, turning to Wood, "I accused you of practicing the black art, and really, my friend, you'll have to admit that this *is* magic."

She looked about her curiously. The dazzling effect of crystal walls, which reflected the lights of scores of flickering candles, was relieved by the tropical luxuriance of the floral decorations. Green vines were festooned about glittering pillars from which they drooped to trail—a delicate tracery of consummate grace—across the cool hardness of a rough stone floor, whereon hemlock bows had been thickly strewn to break the sounding echoes of such unwary footfalls as might escape the silencing hush of scattered rugs. A heavy curtain of pine and spruce screened off at the far end of the grotto a small inner recess where, according to Travers, there might have been found the necessary furnishings of a modern if temporary kitchen, which boasted the first electrical cooking apparatus that had been imported into the Territory.

At the opposite end of the cave was the wide opening of that magnificent approach through which Richard Wood's guests had just been brought, from Druid Hall, to this fairyland beyond. There was an utter absence of timbering in this long, wide anteroom, where (as the ores had been taken out huge pillars were left to support the workings overhead), as the eye traveled

through the long vista of a wide collonnade it noted the rich coloring of native copper that projected from the rough-hewn stone, tinging huge columns and massive arches with a touch of splendor that was almost Romanesque.

"I had thought," began the girl, smiling, as her eyes came back to the face of Richard Wood, after a brief but thorough survey of the details of her surroundings, "I had almost thought that I knew a little about this mine.

"Because you have been good enough to answer my questions I began to imagine that I realized something of its significance as a producer, of its place in the past, of its promise for the future. I was prepared, I believe, to expect much." Again that swift glance, with its comprehensive appreciation of a scene whose weird beauty created a fanciful charm that seemed almost too unreal. "I was prepared to expect much; but for nothing, I think, like *this.*"

"I am glad," and there was a thrilling note of pleasure in his voice, "that you like it."

"Like it?" her eyes shone, and her breath came fast; she seemed moved tonight, by forces outside of herself, by a power beyond her experience, that gave to each trivial word and act the buoyant significance of some divine afflatus. "Like it? I did not *dream* that there *could* be such infinite variety in one mine!"

Her enthusiasm affected him strangely. Well modulated, but rich and full, it was capable of the same fine *nuances* that distinguished her dear voice. What a vivid little zealot she might be! What an ardent

champion of a cause—in spite of her immense capacity for reserve. The real woman was a paradox, but it was the real woman that he loved.

"And I did not dream," he leaned toward her slightly. His tone was meant for her ear alone, but his words, a gentle mockery of her own, maintained for them both the conventional pose, "I did not dream, you know, that there *could* be such infinite variety in one woman."

Just then her right-hand neighbor claimed her attention, and Richard Wood remembered the lady at his left. It seemed a very long time before she turned to him again, and when she did so, at length, it was to ask a question.

"Mr. Van Horn has just been telling me that Bobby says you are going to allow us to go through some of the earliest workings of the mine. Have you really given your consent at last?"

"We may try it," he replied, briefly, "after dinner, if there is time." And then he added with deliberate gravity, "ever since you told me that you would like it I have wanted, myself, to take you through—Queen Elizabeth."

His identification of herself with the mine was unmistakable. It amounted almost to personification, and not daring to meet his eyes, she became suddenly preoccupied with the contents of her plate.

"It was good of you," she murmured, finally, "to save it for the last." She waited a moment and then went on slowly, almost tentatively, "I have wanted to thank you for making it all so beautiful—for me. Personally, as you know, the history of this mine means

much to Jack and—to me. We have come to regard it, I think, as the crowning hope of our father's life, and I am glad," she was speaking more rapidly now, as one who has a confession to make, as one who is afraid that she cannot get it over, "there may not be another opportunity to tell you, just *how* glad I am that you have so intimately connected my father's work with yours.

"You see," she looked again into his face, and this time her eyes met his own bravely, unflinchingly, while through them he read her to her very soul, "you see that I am no longer trying to dodge the issue, but—I think—that I am hardly yet sure enough of—myself—to refuse to tell you good-bye."

"Couldn't we rely upon my faith in possibilities, Queen Elizabeth?" his voice was passionately low and intense.

"If only it were a question of your judgment about a mine! I have boundless faith in *that.*" In her eyes was the remotest suggestion of unshed tears, but the humorous irony of a sorrowful little smile still played about the corners of her mouth.

"How *can* I make you understand?" her voice was hopeless, almost despairing. "Don't you know that even if there were, by chance, what you mining men describe as an 'attractive proposition,' it doesn't necessarily follow that it would be worth developing."

There was a possessive tenderness in his laugh that made it almost a carress, as he said.

"You forget that there is a test; that it is possible to determine with absolute certainty the proportionate

value of a precious metal by an assay of the ore. I have found—I have found—but on the whole—I shall not tell you, *now*, what a fabulous percentage of gold I have discovered in Queen Elizabeth."

"Aren't we mixing our metaphors or is it only our metals?" she asked lightly as the talk at their end of the table drifted into a general discussion of the originality that had been displayed in the selection of the souvenirs, diminutive copper ingots, engraved with the date and the name of the person "for whom this metal was mined," which had been converted into a variety of dainty knickknacks that appealed to the men not less strongly than to the women guests.

A moment later, Mrs. Winston, that able patroness and dispenser of Wood's hospitality, who had won the playful nickname of "hostess *pro tem*," rose and the ladies were conducted, once more, through the stately colonades of the anteroom (in whose remote shadows the musicians were concealed) to a new retreat which the resourceful Travers described as the drawing-room "corner" of Druid Hall.

"Here," explained that gentleman, blandly, "we shall leave you to a lively discussion of the latest copper gossip, and presently," he added as a parting shot, "as many as want to may 'do' the mine—as much of it, that is, as the necessity of catching a midnight train will permit."

Five minutes later, in the "dining-room," Travers removed his cigar and tore open a telegram that had been put into his hand.

"Pardon me, Wood—gentlemen"—and then, after a hasty glance at the yellow slip, and a "no answer" to the waiting servant, he added quickly, addressing his host, "A message from Jack Treverin, and—what do you say to my reading it aloud?"

Richard Wood's nod expressed full approval, and there was a general cry of "go ahead."

"Here goes, then!" cried Travers impulsively, springing to his feet. "It's a personal message, in answer to my note, but I like the tenor of the man's regrets." After which brief explanation, he read: "Letter received. Sorry I can't be with you. Splendid idea. Merry Christmas and a toast to Queen Elizabeth."

"A toast!" exclaimed Travers, enthusiastically, rais- his glass, "the first toast of the evening; the last toast of the day—To Queen Elizabeth!"

"The lady or the mine?" demanded the daring voice of some youthful adorer, whose zeal had outrun his discretion.

In a moment all was confusion, and above the wild clamor of each frantic effort to be heard such phrases went flying from mouth to mouth as "the lady," "the mine," "either," "both," for few of the men present realized any special significance in the name.

Travers, for the first time in his life, completely at a loss, stood for a second, irresolute, angry, devoutly wishing that he might have bitten out his tongue before it had uttered the fatal words, and muttering savagely through his teeth something about fools rushing in where angels won't intrude.

An instant later the tumult ceased, for Richard Wood was on his feet. In the midst of the pause—a breathless hush—his level glance sought and held the angry eyes of Travers, and, when he spoke out of the profound silence, his grave voice sounded almost stern.

"I should like," he said with slow emphasis upon every word, "to respond to the toast as Mr. Travers gave it.

"Queen Elizabeth, gentlemen!" and he raised his glass on high.

"*Vive la reine!*" As their eyes met the lips of Travers formed the phrase without uttering a sound and when solemnly, almost reverently, the toast had at last been drunk, there was a quick shiver of crystal as the host's glass reached the floor, and the ring of an answering crash as that of Travers followed.

Swifter than thought the other men responded to their lead, and with a dramatic finale of dashing and noise, the tension at length snapped.

It was over, and Richard Wood proposed their adjournment to Druid Hall. No one but Travers quite understood, and Travers it was who grasped his hand as the two men passed in the anteroom before they joined the ladies.

They were alone together—the man and the woman. Far below the surface of the world, deep in the heart of the earth, away beyond the problems of the universe, the man and the woman—alone.

The others had gone on with the Baron, but Richard Wood, in the midst of a thrilling story that was vividly

reminiscent of her father, had paused for a moment tc illustrate a point, and thus it happened that these two had lingered in the remotest corner of a very old section of the mine.

She hung upon his every word. Was it only that she was loth to lose one single item of a glowing incident? Would there be for the man and not for her a lingering pain in farewell?

His narrative was almost concluded, and then, they would have to move on. Lost in the absorbing beauty of her face, he prolonged almost mechanically each closing sentence, hoping and yet dreading his final parting with her eyes.

Through those eyes alone he had first come to know this woman, and in their unfathomed depths he had found his prophetic promise of that lofty mystery of passion which reaches its highest fulfillment through absolute union with spirit through perfect marriage with mind. With the adorable lips, as guardians of sense, he had not ventured, even in thought, the intimacy of contact, but he waited for the eyes, as sentinels of her soul, to speak him his last good-bye; and he had not waited long when the wheel of Destiny turned.

The girl, who had been watching his face intently, saw it grow suddenly very grave. His glance traveled swiftly about (with the look of a man in a trap) then came back with a shock to her face, and when, at last, he spoke his voice sounded hoarse and unnatural.

"Do you see that ladder?" he demanded quickly, nodding in the direction of a dim, far corner where

some shadowy object seemed to dangle unsteadily from the rotting timbers of the roof.

"Yes," she replied in a startled tone, but even the sound of her own voice seemed to come from far away, and then all at once she realized that something had happened, that some danger must be close upon them, that it was coming very swiftly, with a mighty rush and a roar. She knew that it was some peril which she did not comprehend, some horror at which she only guessed, and she knew it from his face.

She read in that face his fear for her life, a passion of love and pain, and in the supreme travail of the moment she knew that her own love was born.

She was his for life; she was his in death and—he? Facing death—*he*—was hers. There was no other fact worth recognizing, and, as it swept over her with a mighty rush of joy, she smiled suddenly into his eyes.

Like the glory of a summer dawn his answer came to him as he had hoped that it might come, but the fulness of its meaning was lost upon him then. Days later he understood—days later, when she had gone.

Swiftly, desperately he was thinking—dispassionately, coolly planning how he might save her life.

"Come!" he commanded, at last, and while his voice carried a sharp note of decision, she detected in it also a shade of forced gayety which told her that he was still hoping to keep her in ignorance of their danger.

"We are going up that ladder over yonder." He talked rapidly as he led the way, with the deliberate haste of a man who calculates time in seconds.

"It's high and a trifle shaky," the calmness of his

comments made them almost weird, "but I'm going to hold it, to keep it firm. You are to take the first round with your foot, the third with your hands, and after that you must climb.

"Ah, you understand," as she put her foot into his waiting hand, "good! It was almost as easy as getting into a saddle, wasn't it?" He was talking quite naturally—against time—in a brave effort to give her courage.

"But it wobbles frightfully," she cried in tremulous uncertainty, as she lost the final grip of his helping hand.

"I know, little girl, but it's safe, sweetheart, and remember, you've *got* to climb." The anxiety in his voice did not escape her quick ear any more than did its firm tenderness, but there was something almost tragic in this, his first use of an endearing term, a note that might have alarmed her had she detected it in time—thrilling, as it did, so perilously close to the sounding chord of a possible, final farewell.

"I will," she replied with a desperate determination to do as he directed, and then, steadily, swiftly, she began to make the ascent while the sickening sensation of being swung far out into space made her head swim dizzily.

She had gotten half-way up when it occurred to her that he was not following and she remembered in a flash how he had said that he must hold the ladder. Was he there, at the bottom, still, making things safer for her and quietly risking his life?

In that instant of apprehension all of her fear was gone, and her voice as it came down to him out of the shadows was clear, imperious and firm.

"I shall go no farther; in fact, I am coming down, unless you will start at once."

"Elizabeth," he implored helplessly, conscious that he was at the mercy of her will, "there may be so little time, so much less, even, than I fear."

"At once, Rick, I am waiting," and he knew that the woman had won.

"Coming," he answered shortly, and in less than a minute he had reached the point where she clung unsteadily to the swaying ladder; in a moment more he was clambering with her the rest of the way, while the rush and roar came nearer, and they heard the sharp crashing of heavy timbers followed by the dull thud of falling rock.

"Oh," she asked breathlessly as she was half lifted through an open trap-door above their heads (which was hastily dropped and firmly fastened down as soon as they were safely landed on the flooring above), "what terrible thing is happening?"

"One flight more. Do you think you are able to take it? I'll explain later," and he steadied her against his arm while he quickly struck a match and peered through the darkness for the foot of another ladder.

"The lights are out here, the wiring comes in from below, but we'll be all right on that score when we reach the third set and another tunnel-level.

"You're safe enough now, Queen Elizabeth," he said finally, as he fairly lifted her through the last trap

door and helped her to her feet, and she felt that it was true from his short, quick laugh of relief. "Why, dear heart, how you are trembling!"

He had drawn her hand lightly through his arm in order that she might have the comfort of feeling that she was not alone in the darkness, but had been too busily occupied in finding and lighting a pocket flash-lantern to give her any further attention. Now, however, in the sudden flare of light, he noticed that she was extremely pale, and he felt the quick reflection of her barely suppressed shudder.

"But I'm better now," she answered smiling, "and quite ready to go on."

"Were you very much afraid, dear?" and he laid his hand over the fingers that rested on his arm as he might have reassured a frightened child.

"I was afraid," she answered gravely, "I was afraid —there—on—the ladder that you weren't going to come."

The downcast eyes, the trembling fingers, the quivering lips—all might have told him of this strange new thing that had come to him—all breathed the precious secret that he wanted most to hear. And yet by some strange irony of humorous caprice Richard Wood did not know.

"But I had to come," and he laughed at the memory of her clever ruse. "You put me in a trap and it wasn't a question of choice. Could I have let you wait there longer? Listen! Do you hear?"

And then suddenly she felt as though the world were rocking beneath her feet, as though the surrounding

earth was shuddering about her ears as though the very foundations of the universe itself had broken up about them, leaving her strangely happy and somehow very safe. There had been a mighty shock, followed by a dull rumble, just beneath them, and then something seemed to have gone beyond them, some sweeping volume of sound that had passed like a sharp clap of thunder, leaving long reverberations in its wake.

He told then, briefly, that he could only guess at the cause of the acident without in any sense realizing all its details.

It might have originated with a flood of water that had accumulated during the heavy rains of the past few days in an abandoned heading, in a far-away breast of a worked-out drift or in an unguarded pocket of some raise. A great and unaccustomed pressure, followed, perhaps, by the sudden breaking of a wall—who could tell? And then again the accident might not have been caused by water at all, but may have had its beginning in an unlooked-for "cave" of earth and rock, or that flood of sound that had just passed so suddenly beneath them may have been water and earth together—a seething sea of mud.

He explained to her how the softness of the ores in these older portions of the mine had made the problem of timbering a serious one, that because of this, as well as of a gradual creeping of the mountain, it had been frequently necessary to bulkhead the openings in order to keep them intact.

Now and then, where the rotting timbers were not sedulously guarded and frequently renewed, as in the

abandoned workings of a very old mine, the caving in of the ground or the breaking down of a wall did, once in a while, occur, but in spite of these threatening circumstances, by the exercise of exceeding care, no great accidents had as yet taken place.

They were, for instance, at this moment, he told her, in the second "set" of an old stope which had been, by the way, worked out, not less than thirteen stories high. Timbered up with twelve by twelve square "sets" there had been formed in the stoped-out ground, she was told a series of compartments or chambers which were built in the working out of an ore body that had been over three hundred feet in width, at this point.

"And now, no doubt," he continued smiling, "you want to ask how it happened that, when this mighty flood of something or other tore its way through the east wall of that chamber beneath and rushed out at an opening in the west wall to bury itself in the depths of an abandoned shaft beyond; you want to ask how it happened that these upper stories didn't cave in, too, and why, just now, we are safe. Simply because precautionary measures have been taken to guard against complete disaster anywhere. This platform," and he tapped the flooring on which they stood, "is firmly anchored to the walls of a 'set' whose beams rest securely upon a separate ledge instead of being built up from below, and so this water or earth or mud, whichever it happened to be, having another outlet, has passed through underneath and left us safe in our retreat beyond the power of disaster."

"And the others," she asked fearfully, "where are they?"

"They were sent to the surface, long ago, where, you will remember, the few who did not care to explore were to await our coming. We must join them there at once, by the way," and he looked at his watch. "Your train leaves in half an hour."

"And you?" she asked unsteadily, "aren't you coming with us a little way?"

"I intended to," he replied regretfully, "but now I shall have to wait and look into this accident. We'll climb this other ladder to the third set where, by tunnel, on a higher level, we can quickly reach the hoist."

"We shall have to hurry," he said, pausing at the foot of the ladder, "or you couldn't make your train."

"I wish," she began reluctantly, "I wish that you were coming, too."

"You couldn't wish it as devoutly as I do," he replied jestingly. "If you had, you know, you might have stayed."

"But I have no right to be bothering you now, or myself, either, for that matter," he added quickly, with a half sigh. "Duty before pleasure, you know, and this time, luckily for me, the duty includes your *interests*—and Jack's."

"You are thinking of the mine," she said gently.

"I am thinking of the train," he replied gravely, "the train—and good-bye—and you. After that"—— he paused abruptly, for he had not yet allowed himself to consider life without her.

"'After that—the deluge.'" she quoted softly.

And he thought that she referred to a flood in a mine!

CHAPTER XXI.

"And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess followed him."

It was the bitterest night of a very cold winter, and for the first time during an unusually brilliant season of opera, "Siegfried" was being presented in New York.

In spite of the weather, however, the house was crowded, for the cast was exceptionally good and the performance promised to be as notable a one as had yet been given during a regime which was revealing to the most blasé musical public in the world new powers and possibilities in the singing of Wagner's musical dramas.

If many of the parterre boxes were, as usual, empty during the first act, in one of them, at least, every chair was occupied long before the completion of the overture.

"This," said Robert Travers, glancing over as much as he could see of the brilliant "horse-shoe,"—"this looks lonesome."

He had come in last, with haste, and after greeting everybody jovially had dropped into a seat behind Mrs. Winston.

"Yes," admitted that lady, with a martyr's sigh.

"We had to send regrets to Mrs. Van Horn's dinner. Elizabeth never misses Ternino's Brunhilde, you know."

"But why not have waited, for the last act?" demanded Travers with a wry face.

"There's something in the musical atmosphere that leads up to it, my dear Bobby," said Mrs. Winston, with the indifferent shrug of one who is quoting another's thought.

"You've forgotten the sword song and other potent elements of inspiration—the youthful buoyancy and ardent eagerness of the forest-boy—in fact, all of the alluring charm of that captivating hero who makes the last act possible."

"Musical atmosphere, indeed," exclaimed Travers, with sarcasm, "that dragon is positively the most ridiculous piece of machinery that was ever imposed upon an audience outside of the nursery. Elizabeth," he asked, leaning toward his cousin with a twinkle in his eye, as the curtain went up, "don't you think that this sort of thing vulgarizes art?"

"Perhaps," she replied demurely, "perhaps you prefer absolute music," for his well-known indifference to the entire subject was a standing joke in their set.

"If I'm not a man with music in my soul," he rejoined mischievously, "it's probably because a concord of sweet sounds doesn't often come my way. Who knows? At any rate, Wagner's clashing harmonies move me not at all. They're neither music nor drama, merely an elaborate embroidery of melody over old poetic ideas.

"Besides, *ma cousine*," went on Travers discursively,

as soon as he had gotten fairly astride of his hobby, "don't you agree with the man who said that 'poems die when living beings get into them'? I do. Witness yonder rotund Siegfried, for instance, frisking about the stage! Doesn't he mar, p[illegible]t all redemption, any implied idea of 'love's young dream'?"

"Bobby, you are almost hopeless!" cried the girl, laughing. "But I do agree with you, a little bit," she added, quickly, "and with that other person, whoever he was, who said that 'making music which one can see is a death-blow to the lofty idealization of art.'"

"You think vision not at all essential to the artistic imagination, I suppose." His tone was quizzical.

"It's almost a drawback, sometimes," she confessed.

"'The songs that should swim on high, like swan cloud, cleaving skies blue and inaccessable' ought to be heard with one's eyes closed; when they are brought down to earth as hopelessly as that," and she nodded lightly in the direction of the stage.

"Seeing the opera, with you," he began teasingly, "may not quite be a liberal education, but at least it's a rather unique course in art."

"I consider that the cruelest remark you ever made," she smiled with marked displeasure, but her laughing eyes contradicted the statement.

"And I meant it for a decided compliment."

"It was altogether too doubtful, Bobby, I assure you. 'A unique course in art' savors rather unpleasantly of artlessness or artfulness, but I'll forgive the *faux pas* if you'll confess what you honestly think of Ternina in this the most difficult of all the Brunhildes."

"Ternina is a superb actress," admitted Travers, "which can't be conceded in the case of all the others, and I suppose that's a gentle hint that you would like me to *listen* through the mighty climaxes of the last act instead of *talking*."

"How *well* you understand one, Bobby," with a bewitching smile, as she dropped her eyes and began to follow the score.

"'Mum's the word,' then," quoted Travers, folding his arms across his breast and assuming a rapt expression. "Just watch your cousin hold his peace."

His attitude was so irresistibly funny that it sent her into a gale of suppressed merriment, from which she had scarcely recovered herself when the act was over.

"Please, Bobby, don't spoil the last scene for me," she implored.

"Not I, Queen Bet—as I said before, *je suis* mum—*tu es* mum—by Jove," he exclaimed, interrupting himself and leaning eagerly forward in unaffected astonishment, "it *is* he." Then turning to the girl suddenly, "Your pardon, Elizabeth, for interrupting the preparatory seance, but it's quite worth while, this time. Look, quickly, the lights will be out in a minute—in the back row of the orchestra, right hand side—aisle seat—isn't that Richard Wood?"

"Where?" she asked quickly, and as she raised her glasses she was aware that it took all the force of her will to prevent a telltale trembling of her hand.

"Yes," she rejoined quietly, and although she was inwardly shaken with a strange excitement, her voice

sounded quite calm and almost cold, "it *is*, really, Mr. Wood."

"I wonder," said Travers, speculatively, as the curtain rose, "what could have brought him across the country so soon? He didn't mention coming when we left."

"No," she assented quickly," he didn't mention it."

In the meantime, Richard Wood was enjoying the drama. He had never thought that he could care for opera until he heard Elizabeth Treverin say that she considered Wagner's portrayal of the end-of-the-century woman almost prophetic, and when he had demanded to know upon which of the heroines she based her opinion she had replied "the creation of Brunhilde alone, shows, I think, a master's profound comprehension of the contradictions of modern womanhood."

It was then that Richard Wood had determined to look into the character of Brunhilde, and a fortunate chance had brought him his opportunity tonight.

He had little technical knowledge of music. It was rather as a stimulus of poetic ideas that it made to him a definite appeal. Grasping as it did the essence of certain emotional states of the human soul, and portraying them through glowing melodies that delight the sense—music seemed to him the most poignantly expressive of the arts. And yet Richard Wood was perfectly aware that the exhilaration of the moment had not come to him through the medium of that delicate interplay of primeval human passions which was being enacted on the stage.

Beautiful and satisfying as was the interpretation of

the part of the heroine; rich in color and potent in musical quality as was the voice that thrilled and vibrated with the intensity and steady access of emotional power, both might have left him cold and unmoved—repelled, even, as he was by the tawdry make-believe of the scenic equipment and the minor details of the ensemble.

It was one of his idiosyncrasies to dislike the theatricalization of love, but tonight, strangely enough, he seemed better to understand, through the wonderful impersonation of the goddess woman, the character of the girl he loved. He received an impression of that subtle mingling of nobility with tenderness, of impulsiveness with restraint which made the regal dignity of Elizabeth and the wholesome sweetness of Barbara never wholly separate and distinct. Yes, that had been her secret; she walked a goddess, enveloped in the rosy cloud of her ideals—apart from her world when she seemed most in it and of it—separated with a singular detachment by the power of the things she loved. And he? Who was he that he should dare to win this woman?

If marriage were the destiny of the immortal maid, the gods had, at least, granted that she mate with a hero. For the moment he felt humbled, almost afraid. And yet, after all, was not the supreme test of the heroic a final courageous assumption of the man's power to win the woman? A superb primeval strength, the god-given power for mastery?

And then it was that he heard the first strains of the great love music of the awakening. With glorious abandon the marvelous voice seemed to fill the house—almost the world—with the exaltation of the sentient

moment, and its last poignant appeal for the separateness of woman's individuality—that individuality which was destined from the beginning to find its highest freedom in perfect union.

> "Leave, ah leave—leave me unlost,
> Force on me not thy fiery nearness.
> Shiver me not with thy shattering will,
> And lay me not waste in thy love."

Ah, that was the meaning of the look that he had detected, at times, in Elizabeth Treverin's eyes. She feared him, thank Heaven, she feared him because she knew that he could make himself master of her destiny.

As soon as the curtain fell Travers signaled that he would meet him in the lobby from which they made their way to the Fortieth street entrance, where they arrived just as Mrs. Winston's carriage was being called.

"I must see you alone, tonight, if possible, Queen Elizabeth," said Richard Wood in an undertone, while Travers was looking after his aunt.

"Bobby," said the girl quickly, "go on to Mrs. A's with Cousin Cornelia and the rest; Mr. Wood wants me to drop him at his club."

"By all means," responded Travers genially, getting in beside his aunt. "Your brougham will be along next, Elizabeth. *Au revoir,* Wood, see you tomorrow—awfully glad you're in town!"

"Thank you," called Wood. "Good evening, Mrs.

Winston," and with a final slamming of doors they were gone.

On the way up town Richard Wood explained briefly that he had arrived only that afternoon, had called rather late, had found that she was dining out with Mrs. Winston, and that they were going very early to the opera, where, as she saw, he had followed.

"Is—is anything wrong?" she asked tentatively, a trifle nettled by his evident reluctance to explain so urgent a desire to see her.

"I hope," he replied earnestly, "that at last everything is going to be entirely right. I wanted time to talk to you as soon as possible," he added. "Are you booked to Mrs. A's tonight?"

"I told Jenkins 'home'," she confessed smiling, "and," she added quickly, "here we are."

"I'm afraid," she said later, as she led the way into the library—"I'm afraid that grandfather isn't up, and that Jack has not come home."

"And I'm afraid," he said softly, as he smiled down into her eyes," that I'm not as sorry as I ought to be."

She had thrown off her wrap and was standing for a moment while she warmed her fingers at the open fire. The gown that she had on was of some cloudy diaphanous material which seemed, like everything else that she wore, in exquisite harmony with his ideas of her, and yet entirely subordinated to the enshrouding mystery of her personality.

Hitherto he had been absorbed, lost in contemplation of his ideal love, but tonight it was the real woman that gripped his heart. Every tone of her dear voice, each

little individual trick of expression, had its special note of appeal. Even a stray lock of hair that had almost crept into her eyes had for him a vital charm, and he wished with every fibre in his being that he might try himself to put it straight.

"I have come, Elizabeth," he went on slowly, "I have come, sweetheart, to take you back to Arizona."

"How do you know," she whispered, avoiding his eyes, "how do you know that I am ready to go?"

"Because," he said firmly as he imprisoned her hands—"because of what your eyes told me, Elizabeth, out there—in the mine."

As there flashed through her suddenly the thrilling consciousness of that look she trembled slightly, while her head drooped lower and she tried to withdraw her fingers.

"Elizabeth, you *know* that you love me—*say* that you love me, dear."

She raised her head slowly until her eyes rested within the level of his own vision, and in one flashing moment of swift apprehension they told him all that he wanted to know. In their shadowy depths he read the veiled mystery of her love and its subtle sweet allure.

"When," she breathed, "tell me, when you found it out."

"I think," he said slowly, "I think it was only four days ago. Before that, Elizabeth—my dear, my dear—I don't like to think of before that."

"Poor Rick," she whispered gently, "poor Rick."

"Don't you imagine," he asked presently, "don't

you imagine that you might tell me that you love me in still another way?"

"Another way?" and her eyes questioned his.

"I have begun to wonder," he said with sudden wild yearning, as he read the look in her eyes, "how you might express it—with your lips."

"I—I can *say*— if you want—that I love you, Rick."

"Could you say it to my lips, sweetheart?"

"I had imagined," she said demurely, "that you would be strong enough to wait until—almost until," and her eyes laughed, "you had taken me out to Arizona."

"If you had ever known," he began irrelevantly, "if you had ever known, Elizabeth, what the thirst of the desert means——" his eyes were alight, but she knew that it was not with the spent fires of sombre memories —"you might understand how a man feels when he first finds water.

"The thought of it has been his inspiration, the taste of it his dream, and when, at last, the first faint whiff of its vital fragrance permeates his consciousness, like the sweet breath of rain upon parching ground, all his *need* of it is suddenly concentrated into one immense desire. To drink in the sound of it, through his ears, the sight of it with his eyes; to *feel,* through every nerve of his body, in every fibre of his being, with every sense alert, the wonderful, glorious *life* of it to *realize* in all its intensity the height and depth of a mighty passion that finds voice in the one great cry:—"Give me but one deep draught to quench my thirst for *thee*!"

He waited while she—thrilled by the miracle of this

strange new eloquence became splendidly aware of unsuspected vistas in an undiscovered country (a land of wide distances and far horizons) grew exquisitely conscious that the supreme moment of surrender was upon her charged with a promise of ecstacy of whose vague possibilities she had never dreamed.

Of his innate capacity for that bliss of the emotion, that poetic rapture of feeling, that finest flowering of an inherent fiery ardor which the novelists described as passion, he had given her rare glimpses. Could she meet his ardent spirit with the large generosity of an equally fervent love?

"If you had ever known anything like that, my love," he went on slowly, "you might understand, I think, that all my life I have been waiting."

His voice had dropped to an appealing minor whose murmuring cadences touched her with the veiled power of an intangible caress and his pleading eyes were very near her own—so near that, looking full into them, became interconsciousness so deliciously confounding that —suddenly, clingingly, passionately, she gave him the love of her lips.

A quivering breath commingled, as pulsations of soul had blent, and the fluttering pulse-beat of spirit met the first warm heart-throb of sense.

PART II.

"Is there any daysman betwixt us that might lay hand upon us both?"

—*Job* 9:33.

CHAPTER I.

"I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight."

"ROCKLANDS,

"DEAREST JACK: Not an April fourth has dawned since that first anniversary after *the* April fourth that I haven't expected you to forget, and yet somehow you always happen to remember. How do you do it, dear boy? How have you managed to preserve so many of the prettiest sentiments of life without the inspiration of a potent personal element?

"There—you see, I'm again at the same old refrain of '*Cherchez la femme,*' but whenever I look at your flowers, dear, they make me wish desperately for that big, mighty happiness to come to you which never can come until you've found her, Jack.

"I am wondering if this will reach you in New York or have to be forwarded to Washington. Rick says you're to be a sort of Cerberus at the Capital this Spring, and when I asked if that meant laboring with the Congressional halt and the Senatorial blind he merely laughed and replied that he thought your forte was rather the masterful inaction of the watchdog—too completely oblivious to be cognizant of such political sops as are being offered. I suppose that means throw-

ing sand into the eyes of others while never closing one's own.

"Wasn't that delightful? Rick's praise is so splendidly worth while that I love to repeat it even though I know you're smiling at me for 'compromising' my husband by an utterance of mixed metaphors, which, we both know, he's quite too direct to have used. Nevertheless, I've expressed his thought and he's very tolerant of my gratuitous interpretations.

"From your letter, I see, you have an idea that we're up to our ears in Territorial politics. Allow me to correct that very wrong impression, Jack. We're simply submerged—it's an Anti-Joint-Statehood convention, this time, and out here we call it patriotism, not politics —I can hear you laugh, but, *au sereux,* there's a distinction not without a difference, *mon cher.*

"By the way, Jack, you'll forgive the abrupt change of subject. I think you would enjoy the Carrolls if ever you have time to look them up when you're in Washington. They are exceedingly interesting—quite out of the ordinary, you know.

"The Senator (an ex—, of course) is really one of the most delightfully cultivated hosts in Washington. You've heard grandad speak of him often, I'm sure, as 'Harry Carroll,'—one of father's friends. He made a splendid record, I believe, in *la haute* finance during the 'eighties, but retired years ago, and has been a dilettante in literature and a connoisseur in art ever since.

"His wife was a Virginia Minturn, and he himself belongs to a collateral branch of the Carrolls of Car-

rollton. His boyhood (during the war) was spent with maternal grandparents in the North, and from them he inherited the bulk of his fortune.

"Mrs. Carroll is rather eccentric, or pehaps I should say erratic along certain lines. At any rate, she is decidedly original, and her husband is big enough and broad enough to indulge her whims and vagaries.

"She goes in for practical philanthropy and modern impressionism—endows schools for the encouragement of realism in art and gives vegetarian dinners. Her guests are decidedly amusing; some of them I suspect of being only temporary converts to advanced thought and *l'art nouveau,* while others who seem possessed of an appreciative eye for the Senator's rare old masters forgive her fancies, and still others who have a taste for his famous old vintages affect a mild enthusiasm for her latest fads.

"They have a niece, Carroll Minturn—a delightful child when I knew her at the school of Sœur Madeleine, which one attended in one's teens. Carroll was much younger than I, but we seemed peculiarly drawn to one another. I have always explained it from the fact that we were both 'motherless bairns.' At any rate, the Sœur—bless her heart—encouraged the intimacy, and used to allow the child as a 'special treat' to spend a night now and then with me.

"She was only ten—such a dear—and I remember how she used to curl down in the hollow of my arm and ask for 'a story, please, Elizabeth.' 'What kind, Carroll dear?' I used to demand, and her invariable reply would be, 'Oh, anything—I don't care much—but if

it's a fairy-tale be *sure* you have the prince come riding on a beautiful charger, Elizabeth'—and I always did, because she had a passion for horses, even then.

"I haven't seen her since our school-days; we've never been in Washington or any place else at the same time, but I'm told she's spending the winter in the Capital, and is a lovely woman, although something of a *bas bleu.* Her father is *our* Senator Minturn—Arizona's stanch friend—and, by the way, it seems that he spent a number of years out here, 'knocking about the Territory' before he went into politics and became a 'fighting Senator from the South.'

"Do look them up, Jack, and remember Senator Carroll's special fad, like your own, is a penchant for prints. Some of his Rembrandt etchings are, I think, presque unique. He told me he'd like to have your opinion of an exquisite impression of the famous 'Three Trees,' which several experts have pronounced the last proof impression of the first state, but he himself is inclined to think it an after-state—possibly the very first impression after proofs between which and the last of the famous 'firsts,' you say, 'no one will pretend that there is any perceptible difference.' I know you're immensely interested, by this time, just as I meant you to be, so *au revoir, mon frere,* and be *sure* to write me what you think of Carroll.

"Always affectionately your sister,

"Barbara Wood."

"Washington,

"To Mistress Barbara, Sweetest of Sisters, Stanchest

of Latter-Day Patriots, and Dearest Devotee at the Shrine of Wood; Greeting:

"Thy letter hath been forwarded to me here, and in accordance with thy command, O Most Excellent Guardian of thy brother's heart, Most Gentle Arbitress of his destiny, Most Earnest and Tireless Seeker after his soul's mate! In accordance with thy command, O Matchless Queen of Hearts, John, son of Treverin, hath on the afternoon of this 16th day of April duly delivered his credentials at the house of Carroll only to be informed that its worthy head—he whom thou hast exalted with thy praise, was not at home and that his fearsome spouse—the serene highness of vegetable renoun—had likewise departed.

"As for the lady of 'the charger'—but it were well to relate the tale in logical sequence and order.

"Sorely grieved at having been thus ruthlessly deprived of an opportunity to display his knowledge and air his opinions anent the authenticity of 'Three Trees,' thy disconsolate brother thereupon decided to while away an odd half hour that hung heavily upon his hands as a spectator of the dignified gambols of our Elder Statesmen who disport themselves in their legislative stamping-ground for the delectation of the public and incidentally for the good of the Nation.

"In other words and every day vernacular, he strolled down to the Capitol and dropped in at the Senate Chamber.

"And there—evidently one of a party chaperoned by some elderly dame who was holding forth in the members' gallery—thy brother beheld the lady whose fond-

ness for noble quadrupeds—in other words, prancing chargers—thou hast already proclaimed.

"Unlike the usual run of that modern curiosity hight *bas bleu,* the Lady in Brown (for that I solemnly assure thee was the dominant color scheme of the 'confection' or 'creation'—which was it?—that she wore), the Lady in Brown hath about her a certain delicate feminine charm, a subtle air of that womanliness which is not always associated with distinction, and withal a face in whose beautiful repose there is no touch of the commonplace.

"The charming pose of the figure—just a trifle bent forward, with one gloved hand resting lightly upon the rail and an alluring gleam of golden hair under a large hat, made a picture calculated to set thy brother's heart to stirring in the regulation way. But alas, sister mine, as the poet hath it, 'The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglee.'

"Know then, O Gentle Manipulator in futures, that the eyes of the unattainable One were fastened upon the peerless Beverly, that brilliant young orator who came out of the West to dazzle the Nation with overmuch rhetoric. Thou hast heard, perchance, of his unnecessary indulgence in glowing periods and burning apostrophes on the subject of Joint Statehood, and of the fiery eloquence with which he hath managed to enhance his own glory while emphasizing the insignificance of all other issues.

"Hear, then, how, in spite of thy well-known advocacy of the theory of affinities, thou hast been already checkmated by Fate and a Senatorial knight in thy

benevolent but most patent scheme for the furtherance of thy brother's happiness. For gossip here hath it that the aforementioned Lady in Brown hath 'found in favor of the plaintiff,' to wit, that 'Grand Young Man' in whom the concentrated wisdom of the Republic now finds lodgment.

"I fear me, moreover, that the report hath in it some truth, for thy one-time friend strikes thy brother as a person who might interest herself in 'such a son' for no better reason perhaps than the fact that in him she could detect the budding promise of a career.

"Alack a day, I myself have known what it was to cherish once upon a time fond dreams of a career. Such is the estate from which a man can fall to become at length a mere keeper of the bags.

"Am I growing cynical, sister mine? Rather am I wondering if all youthful ideals are not somewhat in the nature of that 'squab' to whom his enemies have likened this interesting statesman—'bigger at birth than at any other time.'

"Tell Rick that I shall write him of any legislation of importance to us, but the complicated game of politics seems to consist just at present in setting off oratorical fireworks which elicit now and then a ripple of applause that confines itself to the galleries.

"Ah, I had forgotten. You will be asking me how I know that she was Miss Minturn. You see, I understand you well enough to anticipate the question. It was simple enough. I happened to hear her addressed by the name and then, later, when I was down on the floor, I accidentally intercepted a mischievous glance

that was meant for the picturesque gentleman whom she afterwards called 'father.' Senator Minturn's tall, spare figure and ascetic face, by the way, are among the finest sights in the Chamber.

"This letter is unconscionably long for me. Hope it won't wear you out and make you never again want to hear from,

"Yours devotedly,

"JACK."

"Tell me, Clarence," demanded Miss Minturn, impulsively, "I have been wanting to know, since Tuesday, who that man is."

"He's the grandson," began Beverly, with the air of one who expects his announcement to create a decided impression, "of Robert Freeman, the one I understand who is to become the head of the family in business—at least the old gentleman has made it plain, they say, that such a result will follow as far as his own interests are concerned."

"But who, may I ask, is *he*?"

Carroll Minturn was conscious that her lip curled slightly in spite of a strong effort to conceal the fact with a smile. It seemed to her one of the most striking proofs of inconsistency in human nature that this man —who wrote print by the yard, inveighing against the danger of allowing "a government to be run exclusively by Crœsus," who professed from the public platform his profound contempt for a purchased public reputation, should be himself capable of attaching so much weight to a name which, to the general public, at

least, was chiefly remarkable for its association with millions.

"Surely," exclaimed Beverly, incredulously, "you can't be serious! In spite of your supreme indifference to the mere claims of wealth (as an open sesame to society, for instance) even you must be aware of a reputation in financial circles like that of Robert Freeman —*the* Robert Freeman. One has to recognize his material supremacy," he added apologetically, "as surely as one must acknowledge the existence of any other earthly potentate."

Almost unconsciously he was excusing himself for an inner mental attitude that had invited her condemnation. She was far from ignorant of the existence of his weakneses, but she dreaded these glimpses of revelation. They had begun to assume almost a sinister significance like the shock of proofs that follow upon definite suspicions.

His explanations only irritated her the more because they argued so conclusively that her worst estimates had been just—he always fulfilled, somehow, her lowest expectations of him.

"You have mistaken, I think (there was just a touch of sharpness in her tone), my views upon wealth. Riches, I think, *sometimes,* express the 'genius of personality'—its gift for success and power—and as for money," she paused a moment for just the right expression of her thought, "I regard money as a very convenient servant, although I shouldn't at all want it for a master."

"It has come to be almost a menace in Washington," he put in quickly.

"Please *don't*," she interrupted smiling, "begin to lecture *me* about the lavish luxury of the Capitol—the regime of Roman splendor and the social sins of the *nouveaux riches*. I've heard so often about the good taste and simplicity of that roseate past, wherein plain statesmen received their due meed of appreciation for merited achievement and their wives were never tempted to envy other women their gowns, but I don't agree with you fully in making a martyr of the poor Congressman and crying down his richer brother. Why should he attempt to emulate the expensive profusion of his surroundings to rival the noise and the tinsel? Why not content himself with old-fashioned notions? The most delightful characteristics of gentle breeding *still* survive among some of the residents of Washington, but their hospitality isn't, of course, extended to the self-assertive importance that unfortunately appears at times in official circles.

"Suppose the people were to do as you suggest and refuse to elect to Congress another millionaire, wouldn't that be a sort of boycott of the rich? And poverty in itself is not a virtue; although plain living and high thinking *have* been so earnestly extolled."

"Then you don't approve of my public utterances on the subject?"

It was characteristic of the man that her opinion of *himself* should be the paramount issue in his mind, while some of her dearest little theories of life in general had entirely missed fire. He was one of those

whose greed of applause would make large demands from a wife.

"How persistently you misunderstand one!" she exclaimed impatiently. "You were as difficult about my original question which, by the way, had no reference to Robert Freeman. My curiosity confined itself to the other man. I'm not at all interested in his grandfather."

She felt humiliated, angry (with herself first of all) for this growing tendency to unreasoning criticism that marred the harmony of their relation. Was it normal, was it fair that she should be constanty weighing his motives and bringing him thus to book? Suppose he were to judge her by her own pet inconsistencies? In a moment she was sorry, with the sweet impulsive contrition of a generous nature.

"Forgive me, Clarence. How foolish of us to quarrel over our ideas about a stranger."

It was from the depths of an honest conviction from which truth seemed the only basis for a better understanding that she asked pardon for the root instead of for its lesser outgrowth which had taken the form of a surface irritation. But to Beverly, sublimely unconscious of his own limitations, her apology seemed worse than trivial.

"Quarrel!" he exclaimed in petulant surprise and very evident annoyance. "My dear Carroll, *I* never quarrel."

"Oh!" she cried breathlessly, and in her tone there was a pained astonishment that he failed to detect. She recovered herself rapidly, however, and with the proud

determination that he should not know how deeply she had been hurt, added quickly:

"Certainly; you are right, Clarence. Quarreling is undignified, as well as incompatible with the pose of the statesman which it is so necessary for *you* to maintain."

There was laughter in her eyes and a friendly raillery in the tone that robbed her words of the slight tinge of satire which might otherwise have been attached to the remark. It was not the first time, moreover, that her keen and ready sense of fun had saved the situation between them.

"Of course," he rejoined, testily.

Like most persons who are solemnly absorbed in themselves he was deficient in humor as well as lacking in those finer sensibilities which can differentiate the far-reaching significance in delicate shadings of manner.

"And I wish——" his monosyllabic interruption had made a difference, and now even her very real contrition could not quite cover the note of gentle irony with which she said—"in fact, I *prefer* to shoulder all blame for our unfortunate little difference. It was quite nasty of me to speak so sharply."

"I had not noticed," he replied, magnanimously, "anything wrong in your tone."

"Really!" and this time the sarcasm was too thinly veiled to have escaped any ears but those of Beverly. "How generous of you not to notice one's faults, Monsieur le Senator."

It was one of his weaknesses to enjoy the dignity of

titles, and, no doubt, because it was his highest claim to distinction the use of the legislative prefix was as incense to his soul.

She—whose traditions had taught her that "the man *cradled* on a peak" must needs descend rather than climb to claim the baubles of earthly honor—could not understand his point of view, and yet the worst of it was, she told herself, that she realized his pet vanities sufficiently well to play upon them.

"To be 'generous to a fault' one has to realize it, my dear." He was smiling once more. Her apology had restored the complacence of self-esteem and his own neat turn of a phrase had completed his good-humor. Satisfied with himself and the world he was again ready to be his most delightful self with her.

But she had reached a point where she could brook none of him, at least, until she had set things right again with herself, and for that she felt sure she would have to be alone.

"I think," she said, wheeling her horse about, suddenly, "that I shall have to leave you here. I had almost forgotten my appointment with father—we are to have luncheon together at his hotel."

They had been riding on the Rock Creek road. It had long been a daily morning habit with her, and of late Beverly had managed frequently to fall in at some point along the way and return with her to her uncle's door. Even the groom had come to regard it as a custom, and was lagging far in the rear, but now she summoned him quickly and gave the order "home."

"May I not come?" asked Beverly as soon as he realized the change of plan.

"Not to-day," she rejoined decidedly, and he understood that she was not to be gainsaid.

"I couldn't allow you to shorten your ride. Besides," and her eyes danced wickedly, "I shall have to go rather fast—to make up time—and you prefer, I think, to walk a horse." He was far from an expert horseman, was in fact keenly aware that he appeared to disadvantage in the saddle, and she had already acquired a perilous understanding of his mental processes.

The man had come up this time, and was off of his horse tightening the girths of her saddle, for he had caught the tenor of the last remark, and experience had taught him how his mistress sometimes rode.

"Everything safe, James?" she asked finally, and then with a cool little nod and a "good morning, Senator Beverly," they were off.

On the outskirts of town she passed John Treverin, who had instinctively drawn aside when he heard the wild beating of rapid hoofs behind him, and was awaiting as a man might wait whom an emergency would find ready for action.

Her horse swerved sightly as it caught sight of his own mount, and then in a moment had shot far beyond him, and was adjusting itself quickly to the rhythmic motion of her swaying body.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed softly, as he noted the easy poise and graceful carriage of the rider," it's the Lady in Brown and—she has a fine grip on her nerves. No

wonder she could appreciate a 'charger'! A woman who rides like that!"

And then—as he dropped into an easy canter—he added speculatively, with a smile that was a trifle grim.

"Is anything up, I wonder, between her and Beverly. I'd be willing to wager a good deal that sooner or later she'll see through the man. Given rope enough and time enough he's pretty sure to hang himself, but the danger would be about the time—if that report were true." With which disconnected sentence he imagined that he had dismissed the subject from his mind.

Carroll Minturn in the meantime, having taken refuge in a flight that freed her from the presence of her lover, was finding more difficulty in getting rid of those doubts that had begun to pursue her in a very definite form.

"And so *he* never quarrels!" she thought, indignantly. "Couldn't he have been chivalrous enough to spare *me* that slap? Ah, that is the very worst of it! One cannot be quite sure whether or no the grace of true chivalry is to be found in his spiritual organization or even in his moral make-up. His vices are only negative, and yet sometimes one wonders if the total sum of them wouldn't almost overbalance his very positive virtues."

She was thoroughly aroused and angry. Every instinct of her nature had risen in arms and was at war with his personality, for in that personality she had begun to feel vaguely a lack which she could not as yet—even to herself—define.

She was thinking swiftly as she rode, trying to find

her way out of a labyrinth of darkness to some central point of light.

"Have all the so-called great men of the world, I wonder," she asked herself bitterly, "been disappointing when one knew them off the stage, when one caught a fleeting glimpse of what they were behind the scenes? Is it true that not one of them could have been the hero of his valet—or his wife?"

"Carroll, Carroll!" cautioned her conscience, "this is high treason to the man you've promised to marry. Besides you were decidedly provoking in what you said and odiously unreasonable in your manner. How could you expect him to know what you were driving at, in your mind, and are you entirely sure that you yourself understand what it is that you want?"

"I am not sure of anything," she told herself rebelliously, "only that I expected him to be more nearly satisfying."

"And yet—oh, I hope," it was a silent, passionate cry, "I hope that I am not growing petty and trivial in my demands, that I am not unfair enough to want perfection, to expect so much more than I could give."

Worn out, at length,, she gave herself over in the end to the exhilarating enjoyment of a purely physical struggle, and rode as she had often done for the mere wild love of riding, after which she brought her horse down to the sedate walk with which they entered town.

She was calmer when she reached home, more humble, ready to meet the full share of blame for the void that had been created by an acknowledged disappoint-

ment, and dangerously ready to exonerate her lover for what might have been a very real failure to measure up to the fullness of the stature of the man whom she would mate.

With the generous impulsiveness of a nature that had not been cast in a smaller mould she would be glad to prove herself wrong in a hasty judgment or an adverse opinion of one for whom she had come to care; she might be almost too quick, indeed, to reason an instinct into a prejudice.

One of the greatest perils of an intellectual woman is her readiness to substitute her belief in that growing mental power to comprehend which we call reason for her former confidence in the greater gift of intuition. which, in its highest development, is vouchsafed to her sex alone. Her judgment, disarmed of this unerring weapon, becomes an easy prey to the conviction that she has been unjust in her methods of forming what may have been an estimate that is wholly just, and thereupon she is more than ready to atone for unkindness of thought by a deeper kindness of manner.

Given such a handicap, a man of inferior clay may have more hope of winning his way toward her favor than his stronger rival who makes a less vital appeal to those sympathies which are so nearly akin to love. Her very conscience becomes his powerful ally—almost his strongest advocate, accusing her of unreasoning criticisms and unfounded dislikes for which she must needs atone.

Ten chances to one, therefore, Clarence Beverly would be able to hold his own with this woman because

of her very capacity to judge him at his true worth, and yet deep down in her subconsciousness on the strong undercurrent of an innate instinct for truth there floated the fragment of a sentence that she did not want to remember but could not entirely forget—"some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise, and wherever the vein of thought reaches down into the profound there is no danger from vanity."

CHAPTER II.

"Now to rivulets from the mountains
Point the rods of fortune-tellers;
Youth perpetual dwells in fountains,—
Not in flasks, and casks, and cellars."

"RICK," remarked Elizabeth Wood, thoughtfully, as she finished reading her brother's letter, "something has gone to Jack's head; he never wrote like this before."

"I have always said, you know," responded her husband smiling, as he came around to her chair and stooped to tell her good-bye, "that a correspondence with you was an inspiration which no man could afford to miss."

"Flatterer!" She smiled absently, reflectively, her mind still upon her brother, although her next words were addressed to Richard Wood.

"When will you learn, dear, that it isn't at all modern to say pretty things to one's wife?"

"One can almost risk not being modern," he replied laughing, "when one has such a fascinating spouse."

She laughed with him very softly, and there was a fine pretense of hopelessness in the way she shook her head.

"You haven't informed me yet," she began at length, and he caught the glimmer of a mischievous

smile, "whether I'm likely to have any impromptu guests for dinner tonight."

"Tonight!" he exclaimed in quick surprise, "have you really forgotten the date?"

She could not see his face, for he was standing in front of her sitting-room window, looking down upon her as she sat at her desk ready to begin the day's correspondence. It was here that they chatted for the few brief moments that were theirs together before each morning's work.

"Have I really forgotten?" she mocked lightly. "Tell me," she demanded, with an air of insatiable curiosity which he suspected to be assumed.

With a sudden quick gesture he leaned over and lightly tilted her chin that he might be the better able to thoroughly search her eyes and then, "What a fraud you are!" he exclaimed, and his low laugh sounded singularly rich and very clear, "when you know as well as I that this is the one evening of the year that is yours and mine—alone."

"Tell me why," she persisted, with a deeply puzzled expression and prettily lifted brows: "Dates have always been my *bete noir*," she added, with a demure smile.

"Eleven years ago," he began gravely, "just eleven years ago today, I discovered that you were *you* through a most delightful letter."

It was one of those anniversaries of whose intimate privacy others would never know, but the fact that it was still celebrated between them was proof that the

touch of time had not robbed the bloom from their love.

"Dear!" was all that she said, but her smile told him many things. "And to think," she added softly, "that Jack, dear boy, unconsciously played the interesting part of Cupid.

"I can't guess," she began presently, "*what* you are going to bring me this time!"

It was her joyous gayety, her child-like enthusiasm for the next thing, that was, perhaps, the secret of that charm which she continued to exercise over this man upon whose matter-of-fact nature sentiment alone might have palled.

"But I can guess—in fact, I almost know, what *you* will bring to me when we meet down there at our trysting place just at the bend of the road!"

"Oh, but that is a very old story, and your gifts are always original and such a glorious surprise!"

"It's a story that never grows stale in the telling and, when it comes to a question of gifts, there isn't even a remote comparison of values."

"Now what," she demanded merrily, with a very judicial smile, "would you consider that a man deserved for such a delightful speech?"

"What he deserves," he rejoined laughing, "is beside the question, but he always takes what he thinks he can get and trusts time and you for the rest."

"Do you know," he added still lingering, "that I used to have a haunting fear that I shouldn't be at all able to come up to your ideas of a husband because my training hadn't included a course in the art of

making love, and I wasn't at all proficient in the graces of courtship. I realized, you know, first from your letter and then, later I saw for myself, that you had been accustomed to rather a finished style from several other men."

"But," she interrupted quickly, "you might have known that you would succeed because," she hesitated a moment for a sufficiently convincing reason, "oh, just because you did so many things well."

"I have succeeded, then?" His questioning eyes sought in hers for the shadow that overlies, sometimes, the sunshine of a happiness which is nothing more than the brightness that comes from reflected light, but to their clear depths they sparkled with the wine of life and a beauty brimming over with the fullness of its joy.

"Don't you know that you have more than succeeded?" she asked, slowly. "Can't you see that you have been a royal lover, Rick?"

"Muvver," asked a little voice at her elbow, "you puomised that Witchard might wide a little way wif faver and Midnight and I wis ou would let Witchard tome wif ou sometime down to ye bend of ye woad."

"You rogue!" cried Wood laughing, as he laid the light tenderness of a loving hand upon each of the baby's shoulders, "what can you know about the bend of the road?"

"Ony one day," began the child solemnly, "Witchard saw his muvver tiss his faver dere, and most all ye uvver times, I fink," he continued with wide, earnest eyes upon his mother's face, "my faver tisses ou."

"A distinction not without a difference," she cried, laughing as she buried her face in his curls, "but you might have spared mother's blushes, son. However, Rick, even out of the mouths of babes one may sometimes acquire wisdom, and," looking over the child's head with a roguish smile, "don't you think I'd better not come tonight?"

"Look here, son," demanded his father as he seated himself and lifted the boy to his knee, "where was Richard when he saw his mother do such a delightful thing? You've all unwittingly plotted against your father's happiness, little man, and now, sir, you've got to help him out."

"I wud wight at dis vewy wimdow," replied Richard, the younger, pointing with one chubby hand out past his father's shoulder. "Tant you see dat wight down dere id dest ye bend of ye woad?"

"It certainly is, Rick," exclaimed his wife, following with her eyes the line indicated by the baby's fingers, "and all this time our little trysting place has been quite within range of a curious eye."

There was a note of real distress in her voice which she tried to cover with a pretty *moue*. "And to think of the reports that may have gotten around through the servants!"

"We can survive them, I haven't a doubt," he replied with a tranquillity that could not quite hide the twinkle in his eye, "although," he added comfortingly for he realized her pet aversion to the public demonstration of a private sentiment, "although, pos-

sibly, the boy is the only one in the secret besides ourselves."

"I'll have to bear my chagrin gracefully, of course, but how would you like to be characterized as uxorious, and I confess that I should't at all care to be considered foolish when we've actually attained the dignified estate of having been married quite eight years."

"I think I can afford to be supremely indifferent," he rejoined, laughing, "as long as the uxorial charms have made me the envy of my friends, and as for that other opprobrious epithet, you are a woman, dear, who is wise enough to laugh at the word foolish, which, however, no one would even dream, I think, of applying to you.

"Besides, as a matter of fact, sweetheart," he was as eager as a boy in his effort to convince her, "this is the only window which could command that view, and"——

"Don't ou wemember, muvver dear, it wud de day when Witchard wud wocked in dis woom by miftake?" The baby memory had at last groped its way back to primal reasons, to first causes, and the baby intelligence asserted its right to be heard.

"You darling," cried Elizabeth, with impulsive relief, 'to make mother remember that this door is always locked whenever she is out! I do, Rick," she explained joyously, for the benefit of her husband, "it has grown to be an almost unconscious habit of the daytime, when my desk is littered with private letters and important papers it simply refuses to be closed, and so as a protection against youthful curiosity," and she smiled over a bright head that had come to her arms for a

reward whose rich significance it could not quite comprehend, "and prying eyes, I simply turn the key, and one day," she added gravely, "when mother was busy and Richard slipped in to hide from nurse he went fast asleep 'wight' uner the lounge and—the tale ends happily—*voila toute*!"

"Bravo, son!" cried Richard Wood patting the curly head; and although he could not comprehend the reason for this general enthusiasm the baby added his note to their mirth and laughed in ecstatic glee. "Mother and father and Richard all remembered at just the right time and, therefore, my dear," he continued, smiling as he rose to go, "promise him faithfully that you won't fail to meet your husband tonight."

"I promise, because I think it would be a very hard-hearted woman who could continue to resist," she returned, with an answering smile.

"Yes, son, you may go, if Faver will promise to put you down just inside the gates. And now it's Jack's turn," she murmured, turning back to her desk, the moment she was alone, while an odd little smile hovered about the corners of her mouth as she thought over her brother's letter. "I wonder, it might have been, Carroll, except for that disagreeable rumor, which probably isn't true."

"Don't you think it was rather naughty, Jack, dear," she wrote, "to accuse your sister of being a self-appointed aide-de-camp to that wily little archer, commonly known as the blind god? To be sure, Rick says I'm quite the most successful matchmaker he knows,

but that is quite another story, and has reference to the servants and my own particular private woes, 'wich I mean ter say,' Jack, it's far from amusing to have matters brought home too closely, and I much prefer the realm of pure romance.

"Apropos of that last sentiment, by the way, I should like to suggest, if it were any use, that in the event of your ever hearing of a good butler, with a little *b*, my dear, referring to a species not a clan, astray and in search of employment, I should like to suggest that it would be a stroke of positive genius, or at least something in the nature of decided inspiration, to express him to me post-haste, that is, of course, *if* he'll come.

"No doubt, you utterly fail to appreciate the vital significance of that little word 'if' and, of course, there isn't a chance that you will 'strike such a bonanza,' but never mind, I've reached that stage of desperation where, like Nora, in the 'Doll's House,' I'm looking for 'the miracle of miracles.'

"I used, I believe, to regard the 'servant problem' as a sort of conversational fetish of the middle-class American, but 'wae's me,' I had yet to learn my folly through the trials and tribulations of keeping open house in the Territory.

"You know, or perhaps you don't know, since I have heretofore borne my sorrows uncomplainingly, or at least have kept them locked in the bosom of my more immediate family, meaning, of course, Rick, without whose sympathy I should long ago have succumbed. You don't know, then, that our ménage has heretofore consisted principally and one might add, perforce of

maid-servants, who seem to find the Western prospect far more pleasing than those male functionaries that have attained an equal proficiency in the art of service.

"For a long time I have suspected our not too-efficient Jehu of being bound 'to the soil' by the charm of my own maid, Celeste, while we are morally certain that he and Rick's *valet de chambre* have united to 'bully' our solitary footman into remaining simply in order to spare themselves the infliction of his work as 'extra duties.'

"Imagine, therefore, if you can, your poor sister's consternation when, a week ago, Celeste announced that she and William (the coachman) were to be married within a month, and I rather fancy she expected me to be thankful that the change didn't involve the loss of William. She has 'consented,' she informed me, 'to keep house' over the stables in order that she might eventually learn to 'take care of' the fine laundry work—Celeste always was a good manager—as well as 'do my hair,' and look after me generally, until I could get another maid.

"That last concession was, of course, meant to stay the outpouring of my vials of wrath, for I'm quite sure every other plan, even about the laundry work, was made chiefly for the good of Celeste and William, and —think of it—she's been with me quite ten years!

"As for the other servants, they're turning us into a perfect matrimonial bureau. I brought out a complete set from New York last Fall—not including Celeste—all warranted 'neat and attractive in appearance

and competent in execution.' A dangerous recommendation, *mon cher,* as you will admit, when you know the rest—for now that I've begun to unburden myself, I think I'll find relief in pouring into your sympathetic ear the whole sad story.

"Before we had been home a month one of the housemaids eloped with a prosperous tradesman, who had been making daily pilgrimages to Rocklands, it was afterwards explained. He insisted upon an early marriage because the trip out here—we're two miles from town—'cut down his profits—they took so much time.'

"The tastes of the parlor-maid and the chambermaids are not so materialistic. To them romance seems to make a definite appeal, or is it only the picturesque realism of this 'wild and wooly West'? At any rate, Rick says the number of bronchos and cow-ponies tied up here after sunset reminds him of a Fall round-up; and I have vague premonitory visions in which all my maids appear to have been corraled by dashing young cattlemen disguised as Lochinvars or seem to be learning the dangerous intricacies of the 'diamond hitch,' and in the general confusion of these nightmares there is always William 'giving the bride away' as he did in the case of that graceless house-maid for whom Celeste acted as bridesmaid—*sub rosa,* I understand.

"My cook, thank heaven, is a fixture; you remember old Aunt Liza, whom mother bequeathed to father and you handed over to Rick? She's the only comfort I have among the cares and troubles of my domestic world. 'Law, honey,' she said only yesterday morning, when I was giving the order for the day, 'doan you

worry 'bout de weddins' cause no mattah what happens you all gwine have victuals to eat ez long as ole Liza's in dis yere worl. 'Sides, dey's allus boun tu be ma'in' an' goblin' ma'iage tell de een ob time; so we mought ez well all tek things easy an' mek de bes' ob what comes.' Which proves, Jack, that I'm not without the solace of philosophy.

"You will hardly be surprised, however, when I announce that I've registered a solemn vow to employ hereafter, if possible, only men-servants—or most 'unattractive' members of the opposite sex.

"Wherefore, I give you *carte blanche* to perform 'the miracle of miracles,' although I haven't, as I said before, the slightest faith in your power along these unaccustomed lines.

"Rick says it would be amusing if it were not too tragic to watch me search through the mail—ruthlessly thrusting aside the epistolary effusions of personal friendship for disappointing communications from some New York intelligence office. He declares he would be almost guilty of bribery and corruption as well as of rashly promising the 'half of his kingdom' if thereby he could succeed in smoothing a few of the gathering wrinkles out of my frowning brow.

"Dear me, this is—what page *is* it? To think I've been driven to garrulity and on such a topic!

"Late Afternoon.

"I was interrupted this morning, dear, and really I am almost ashamed to send this long, heart-rending wail.

"I wish you could see the superb view from my win-

dows! You can't imagine what a fascinating sensation it is to know that one's house is builded upon a rock; to be able to look in every direction for more than a hundred miles. From where I sit perched upon my lofty eyrie I can see far along a winding valley to vermillion cliffs, beyond, that sweep upward in a bold and precipitous line fairly dazzling to the imagination. We certainly 'dominate our landscape,' and that reminds, me Jack, I *wish* you could see our new road. We are immensely proud of it, for the grading is really superb. The incline is more than steep, as you will remember, but the ascent is now so gradual that it seems almost a slight feat to scale our little mountain.

"Like 'Sister Anne,' in 'Bluebeard,' one can descry from this tower one's visitor from afar.

"There is a solitary horseman now, just at the foot of the approach. It will take him fully half an hour to reach Rocklands and the summit, for the road circles about the mountain, twisting here, there and everywhere, like the lines upon a map that lie spread out before one clean-cut and clear, only vanishing now and then around some curving bend or hidden at times from view in the shadow of the trees. In a moment, I can see through the glasses exactly who it is. Ah, but wait—I shan't need the glasses—that rider is surely Rick; he has a certain individual swing—a way, you know, of sitting his horse that is really impossible to mistake, that makes me, always, very sure.

"*Au revoir,* Jack, dear, he is earlier than I expected.

"By the way, *mon frere,* I appreciated immensely

your fine description of my friend; the opinion of a thoroughly disinterested observer is often delightfully piquant.

"I shall address this to New York, as you said you were returning there by a late train on the evening of the day in which your letter was written, and you don't mention when you expect to be again in Washington.

"Always affectionately,

"ELIZABETH."

It was forwarded, however, to the Capital, where John Treverin read with not a little amusement his sister's naive suggestions about finding her a butler, and caught the spice of her humorous nonsense through the 'round-up' of the maids.

"Dear old girl," he muttered softly, "she has her little trials like all the rest of the world, but, thank heaven, she's happy!

"Um," he went on ruminatively, commenting on the letter, 'thoroughly disinterested observer,' I'm not so sure of that fact myself, and neither, I think, is she. A fellow never could hide much from Bab.

"Ah, what's this?" He had been idly turning over his other mail, and glancing over a few cards which had been left during the time that he had been away, when a name on one of the latter attracted his attention.

"Senator Carroll—card dated the 17th—called evidenly the morning after I left Washington"——and then he went rapidly through the rest of the letters with quick, businesslike method.

"Heigho," as he at length picked up the evening paper, with an air of intense weariness, "life is a

pretty steady grind without *any* 'beer and skittles!' ''

What, exactly, was his present idea of 'beer and skittles,' it would not have been easy to say, but certainly one might have gathered from the remark an impression that John Treverin, in spite of his reputed success, had not yet gotten *all* out of the world that the hope of his youth had led him to anticipate.

''Whew!'' and he whistled softly and became suddenly alert as the following paragrph met his eye:

''A report current here, today, that Miss Carroll Minturn, daughter of Senator Minturn, of this city and —— is engaged to Senator Beverly of ——, is allowed to go undenied by friends and relatives of each.

''Miss Minturn is the only daughter of the distinguished Senator of that name, a niece and godchild of ex-Senator Carroll (whose wife was Miss Anne Minturn of Virginia) with whom she has always made her home, when in this city, since her mother's death.

''Senator Carroll, an old resident of Washington, is a descendant of that famous Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, whose statue has recently been placed by Maryland in the 'Old Hall of Representatives' and a portrait of whom as a signer of the Declaration of Independence has long hung in the corridor above the east stairway leading to the galleries of the House.

''Senator Minturn, when questioned about his daughter's reported engagement refused to deny or confirm it, and ex-Senator Carroll seemed inclined not to treat the matter seriously, declaring that he knew nothing about the young people's affairs and would not talk about them if he did.

"The story has created much interest, but none except Senator Carroll would comment on the matter."

"So it's true!" said John Treverin to himself, slowly. "I believe," and his short laugh was not exactly mirthful, "I believe I'm actually rather"—— he did not finish. "Elizabeth's 'tip' came quite too late and I have gotten on just in time to watch another man 'corner the market.' Not a pleasant experience, that, especially to one who dreamed that he might have had some appreciation of a certain class of stock! Which only proves again, I suppose, that Jack Treverin never had any particular business with dreams.

"Hello!" as he mechanically turned a page of the paper, "the 'news' seems unusually interesting and to the point, today." For his mind had suddenly been caught by the heading of a column of advertisements wherein he read under the caption, "Butlers," that a lady, desirous of placing to his advantage a competent negro servant who had served for thirty-five years in the capacity of butler, would endeavor to receive by special appointment those who were sufficiently interested to communicate with her upon the subject, and the number of a post-office box was given below.

"'What larks!'" exclaimed Treverin. "Here's a remedy for ennui, 'this here'!

"Discretion, however, being the 'better part of valor,' we'll first send a wire to Elizabeth," and seizing a telegraph blank he wrote quickly: "Ship ahoy! Apropos of butler (with a small *b*) how would a man of color do? Answer at once."

He was at dinner when the reply came.

"'The miracle of miracles!' Anything that is honest and can serve a dinner gratefully received.

"ELIZABETH T. WOOD."

Whereupon he sent off—special delivery—a carefully worded communication to the effect that Mrs. Wood's representative would be very glad to discuss the subject of the enclosed advertisement at any hour which the lady, mentioned therein, might appoint.

The reply, also carefully worded, and sent special delivery reached him at breakfast. It read:

"Miss Minturn will receive the representative of Mrs. Wood on Thursday morning at ten o'clock, with reference to the butler mentioned in her advertisement of Wednesday."

And was signed by somebody as secretary. The address, an exact replica of his own scrawl, told him that the writer had not been able to decipher his name, whereat he chuckled audibly:

"My luck has turned at last! So it's the 'Lady in Brown,'" he thought, "and she hasn't the least idea who I am—Wood is such a comfortable, ordinary name, and, remember, Jack, you're merely the representative of some unknown Mrs. Wood.

"I suppose it's a philanthropic enterprise, and, by George," lugubriously, "suppose the butler isn't a success? Well," with a long sigh, "I imagine I'm in for it, even though I have him on my hands 'till the end of the chapter.'

"Ah," with a hasty glance at his watch; "there isn't more than just time to meet the appointment!" and having maneuvered his way skillfully past several

acquaintances who tried to detain him in the hotel lobby, he summoned a cab and was gone.

The same turbaned Hindu opened the door who had 'assisted' on the occasion of his social call of about ten days before, but this morning, John Treverin offered no card and the foreign servant, evidently nettled by the omission, gently insinuated with a polite salaam that Miss Minturn was never "at home" in the mornings.

"Huénim," called a low voice, as a door opened suddenly somewhere down toward the far end of a wide hall, "a—a— someone was to call this morning, by special appointment at ten; I neglected to mention it, but when he, when the person arrives, you may show him in here. Oh!" The impulsive exclamation was expressive of vexation and surprise. It was evident to Treverin that the speaker had not realized in her eager haste that the servant was already standing at the open door.

"But, yes, Madame," answered the Indian, turning quickly, "the gentleman hava but now said how there is an appointment!"

"Theseway, please, sir," turning to Jack who, a moment later, was being shown into a small study which impressed him, he afterwards said, as a cross between "m' lady's private sitting room and a poet's corner, a sort of literary apotheosis of a boudoir."

The walls were lined with books whose bindings were as variegated as the titles that ranged all the way from Beowulf to Swinburne and the Jungle Books. Here Montesquieu's "Spirit of Laws" consorted amicably

with Carlyle's "French Revolution" and "Chaucer" in vellum, hobnobbed with "Keats" in white and gold, while Madame de Sevigne crowded De Quincey and Aeschylus elbowed Christopher Marlowe. Here and there, in the small spaces not occupied by bookshelves, a good little etching or a choice engraving made its presence felt; and the warm ivory tones of a "Victory" on its low pedestal between the open windows held the sunlight which filtered through soft draperies that floated gently in the morning breeze.

Carroll Minturn had lingered evidently in "Times Garden," and as the bee extracts its own honeyed essence from many a flower, so, thought John Treverin, "this room represents, no doubt, the subtle fragrance of stored memories that have been gathered as a part of the simple pleasure of wandering."

He smiled inwardly, however, at the catholicity of a taste which could enjoy the vigorous lines and rugged force of Valasquez's "Head of Aesop," and yet give so prominent a place to the ethereal delicacy and intangible atmosphere of an exquisite copy of Corot's "Spring."

"I suppose," was his mental comment, "that this is where she writes!" for it was an open secret, he knew, that 'things of hers' appeared frequently in print over a name which she had acknowledged only to a few intimates.

"Mrs. Wood's representative indeed," thought the girl, as her eye took in at a glance a general impression of Treverin." Unquestionably this is the man who was given that impromptu reception in the rear of the

Senate Chamber on that Tuesday about ten days ago when I was in the gallery with Mrs. S——. The one whom Clarence described as Robert Freeman's grandson. How awkward that I didn't get his name!"

"You wished," she began, in a cool, even voice, coming to business as soon as she had uttered a formal "good-morning," and had invited Treverin to be seated. "You wished, I understand, to see me with regard to the employment of a butler?"

"What a goose I was," she thought, with sudden annoyance, "not to let Uncle Harry attend to this advertising. To be sure, 'Unc' Manassah' vowed I could do it better," and her face softened into genuine tenderness at the sudden pathetic memory of the faithful old black, "but I wish Miss Crimmins (the secretary) were here. I haven't an idea of how to carry the thing through."

"My sister," he replied, with grave courtesy and a quiet frankness that at once relieved the situation, "my sister, Mrs. Wood, whose home is in the far West, has delegated me the arduous task of securing a competent butler."

"You have found it difficult?" she asked with impulsive sympathy, and her eyes were almost merry.

"It seems to me," and in the desperate hope of maintaining this delightful personal note, he deliberately and without qualm purloined the fruit of his sister's experience, "the most stupendous labor that was ever imposed upon man."

"Really," and although she kept her voice most pleasantly impersonal and businesslike, she looked as

if she might like to hear some of his interesting experiences in hunting down this strange quarry. She found it difficult to remember that this easy, polished man of the world, who might be pleasant enough to know, was, after all, simply a stranger who had come to her door in response to an advertisement.

The recollection of this last fact, reminding her that one must be particularly cautious when treading on unaccustomed ground, brought her back sharply to the point in hand.

"You are quite sure that Mrs. Wood will be willing to consider a black butler—that she would have no objection to his color? I mean," she explained hastily, "a man might not understand," she caught the glimmer of a smile about John Trevcrin's mouth and her tone became intensely practical and coldly severe. "A strange element sometimes creates friction in a household, and it is often exceedingly difficult to preserve harmony where there is a mixture of the races."

"I think," he rejoined with an extreme seriousness that had the effect of lightening her own deep gravity, "that it would be possible to relieve your conscientious scruples by means of a sentence from the telegram received from Mrs. Wood in reply to mine propounding just that question." And without the slightest quiver of a smile, he read: "Anything that is honest and can serve a dinner, gratefully received."

The girl's mouth twitched suspiciously, but she maintained the heroic solemnity that had characterized their conversation, and continued with a calmness that he thought adorable.

"The next questions are, of course, yours and—on the whole I think that it would be far better for you to see Uncle Manassah, alone at any hour which you may care to appoint."

The man looked decidedly disappointed. "I'm afraid," he demurred, "that I shouldn't know exactly how to go about it."

"Oh, but you will," she rejoined with decision. "It will all come quite naturally as soon as you get started, and, besides Uncle Manassah will tell you all his qualifications without any urging. He's very proud of the fact that the key to my uncle's wine cellar has lived 'pummanently on his pusson' for thirty-five years."

She quoted the old servant so gravely, so naturally, so tenderly, that Treverin realized fully how unconsciously it was done.

"And if," she continued with admirable forethought, "you want any further recommendation, after talking with Mannassah, my uncle, Mr. Carroll, will be only too happy to write you in his favor."

"I think it only fair to tell you," she added thoughtfully, as though she were still debating the question in her own mind, "that Manassah is as thoroughly competent as he ever was, but he is unhappy here since the advent of the English servants. My uncle would have much preferred to pension him for the rest of his life, but Manassah declares that he is not yet ready to retire, that he wants to 'die in de ha'ness,'" she added with a half smile, "and so we concluded to let him try a change. Of course," she added gently, "the poor

old man understands that he can always look to Mr. Carroll if everything else should fail.

"It seemed to me only right," she continued slowly, "that your sister should be told enough of his history to be assured that 'he's honest and can serve a dinner' —with a sudden flash of a smile, "although I'm afraid," with sober directness, "that it has involved giving more than I meant of our own."

"And I hope you will allow me," he responded earnestly, as he rose, "to express to you, in behalf of my sister as well as of myself, a very sincere appreciation of your courtesy and kindness."

"Thank you," she answered simply, as she rang the bell. "Ah, I had almost forgotten. At what time would you like us to send Manassah, and to what address?" She rather hoped he would give her his name, but instead of that he replied quickly, "You are very good; to the same address as that given in my note, please, and would this afternoon at three be as convenient as any other hour?"

"Quite as convienient," she rejoined, "and I shall caution him to be prompt."

"Thank you," he said smiling, as a servant appeared to show him out.

CHAPTER III.

"O Earth! thou hast not any wind that blows
Which is not music; every weed of thine
Pressed rightly flows in aromatic wine;
And every humble hedgerow flower that grows,
And every little brown bird that doth sing,
Hath something greater than itself, and bears
A living word to every living thing,
Albeit it holds the message unawares."

TREVERIN, who had left word that the old negro was to be sent right up, was alone in his sitting-room, at three.

"Come in!" he called cheerfully, after the first repetition of a timid knock, and looking up suddenly, upon the slow turning of the knob, he saw a white-haired black man of uncertain age bowing with the dignified stateliness of an old-time retainer.

"Ah," exclaimed Treverin, pleasantly, "this is Uncle Manassah, I imagine!"

"Yes, sah," beamed the old man, his black face fairly radiating his pleasure in Treverin's easy assumption of the adoptive prefix to which as a trusted servitor of a more patriarchal era he felt himself entitled, "an dey done tol me down stars, sah, as how you all is Marse John Tre-Tre— beg yo pahdon, suh, but I done fergit de res. Miss Ca'l she jes writ it on dis yer cahd an' I disremembah whethuh she spoke de lettahs er not."

Jack was inclined to think that "Miss Ca'l" hadn't "spoke de lettahs," although he only said that Uncle Manassah needn't bother about remembering Treverin, since it wasn't easy as names went.

"Miss Minturn," he proceeded hastily, anxious to get through with a business which he wasn't at all sure he understood, "Miss Minturn has told me, Uncle, that you think of making a change."

"Yes, sah," replied the old man quickly. "You see it's dis away. Miss Anne she's bown fer tu try expe'-ments an' it's goin' on mo nur ten yeahs now sence de changin' begun. Fust come de French maids an' den de Injun footman and nex' de Talyun gyardner twell we-all got most ernuff er dem furriners roun' yer now fer tu buil' de secun' tower uv Babel. An long hyar lately, sence coluhed suhvants done gone clean outer fashun in Washington, Miss Anne mus hab some er dese yere tall Englishman stalkin' roun' de premises an' even de secon' man givin' hisse'f sech airs ez no well-born, se'f respectin' niggah gwin stan'.

De haid footman come, ricommended, *he* say, by de Lawd Himse'f—not none uv dese yere purty young no-blemans what we all got in Washin'ton payin' dere 'spects to Miss Ca'l an' her frien's. No, suh, bress yuh soul—but hit pears lak de one what ricommended *our* haid-footman is de onliest Lawd on yearth—de ve'y bigges' one uv *all* what ain't come outen de kingdom yit, *he* say. But sakes er live Marse John, I ain't gwine b'lieve de Almighty gwine ter discountenance himself wid such low down white trash," and the old man sniffed contemptuously.

"So dat's huccome I'se seekin' anur place fer de secon' time in my life, an' Miss Ca'l an' Marse Harry low dey gwine ter hep me out!" he finished sententiously.

"But are you willing," querried Jack, laughing, "to go as far West as Arizona?"

"Marse John, scuse me, suh, but you suttinly does seem mo lak we all's kin uv white folks dan er Yankee, an' ef you don' mine, suh, I gwine call you dat away."

"By all means," responded Jack, with a cordial smile, for already he had conceived a genuine liking for the old black who had succeeded in arousing his interest.

"I doan reckon, den, dat you *could* put too much country, Marse John, 'twixt me an' dis yere trash what's tu'nin itse'f out to service in de Capital.

"I ain't sayin'," he added sadly, "but what I'se gwine be pow'ful lonesome fer Marse Harry en specially Miss Ca'l. Ain't I done tote er in dese ahms when she wa'nt mo'n knee high ter her own bay mare."

"You belonged in Senator Carroll's family before the war?" questioned Treverin with sympathy.

"Lawd no, Marse John. We'all des dopted one nurme an' Marse Harry, when I landed in New Yawk fum de South des bout thirty-five yeahs ago.

"Ye see, Marse John, me an' Liza was mah'ed endurin' de wah. It was de las' uv de big doins 'mongst de niggahs down at ouh place, an' ole Miss she give us ez fine a send-off ez ef de hahd times wasn't comin' mighty fas'.

"Ole Marse an' young Marse Tom was off fightin' de

Yankees, an' not long arter dat dey wuz bofe brung home daid, an' ole Miss she ain' las' much longer.

"Den when de wah was ovah, de place, what wuz lef uv it got sole off fer taxes an' me an' Liza with de yuther niggahs what was still dere wuz tole to move off outen de way; an' dat day," added the old man sadly, "it look lak de worl' gwine een.

"De trouble wuz, ole Marse, he lowed I ain't gwine hab strength nuff fer wuk in de fiels an' dat's huccome I done larn what I know 'bout riverincin' de vintages.

"Fer yeahs, Ole Sambo, de butlah up at de gret house what hed mek Ole Marse's juleps fer well nigh fifty summahs—wuz trainin' me for tu tek his place. But when de wah wuz ovah an' wealls folks was daid an' gone an' everybody else lef too pore to tek on any new niggahs, seem lak der wasn't room no mo' fer Liza an' me."

"Howsumevah, on de evenin' uv dat las' day I walks up tu de big house an' sez to de strangah what hed got hole uv de place:

" 'See yah, suh, ef you'll des let Liza an' de baby—fo', bress yeh life, Marse John, by dat time der wuz de beatenes' little pickininy yo' ever see croonin' in Liza's arms" (and his dusky face was alight with pride and joy as he recalled the romance of his youth)—"ef you'll des let Liza an' de baby,' sez I, 'live along in de cabin, same ez befo,' I'll wuk my way clean up to de Yankees an' when I gets one ob dem places what a gentimin fum de No'th done tel me erbout, I'se gwine sen back evy penny, suh, twell de cabin b'longs tu Liza an' me.'

"Well, dat man he done promise an' so I come with

lettahs ricommendin' me fum frens ob ol' Marse, an' not long arter reachin New Yawk I wuz tuk right in by Marse Harry's granpa when Marse Harry wuzn't much mo' nur a boy, an' dat's huccome I been wif Marse Harry eber sence."

"I understand," said the young man gently, "but are you very sure, Uncle, that you'll be satisfied to leave that little cabin—your home down South. Arizona's a long way off, you know!"

"Dey ain't no mo' cabin dere, now, Marse John," and the voice, that had been thrilling but a moment before with the buoyant emotionalism of a child-like race, sounded suddenly lifeless and strangely heavy.

"Oh," exclaimed John Treverin, in quick sympathy. "I'm sorry."

"Thankee, Marse John," but the voice was still singularly lacking in hope.

"You see, sah," he went on slowly, and there was the lingering shadow of a tragedy that was past about the deep furrows in the black face, "you see, Marse John, it happened dis away. Arter I been sen'in my money to dat ar strangah fer nigh on tu ten yeahs, de lettah, one day, come back, an' when I axes Marse Harry to 'splain it to me, I gin telin' him de whole story. De next time he down dat away, he say, he gwine fer to look de mattah up, an' fo' de Lawd, Marse John, ef he ain't discivah dat dar warn no cabin ner no mo' Liza nor no mo' pickaniny to be foun' roun' de place.

"De neighbahs done tell him dat I ain' been gone mo'n a yeah when dat man drive Liza out an teah down

de cabin to improve de proputy so's he kin sell it to some rich gentmuns f'um de No'th, an' ez fer Liza, none of dem know whatever become uv her an' de baby on'y 'ceptin dat she stahted No'th sayin' she gwine fine M'nasah, fer suah.

"Dat's all," finished the old man, wearily, "an' we nevah foun' out no mo', do Marse Harry been makin' all de enquirements he kin, fer yeahs."

There was silence between the two men, for a moment, such a silence as might have marked the ringing down of the curtain upon a sad little drama of life.

"It's another side of the picture," said Treverin slowly, "one of the sides that didn't creep into the inspired vision of abolitionists. Their millennium of freedom hardly suggested the idea that they were merely giving the slave a right to inherit his own bondage of labor, to join that greater army of individual industrial servitude that chooses *sometimes*—its own masters and plans, occasionally—its own life of toil."

"Yas, suh!" replied the old man, ruminatively, comprehending none of the fuller significance of the remark and yet "sensing" vaguely its general meaning. "Dat's what de wah been en done fer me. In slavery we all's black folks was happy an' to ger wifout none uv dis yer scatterin' what comes fom evy man scratchin' fer hissef. Yes, sah, dats why ise a Dimocrat, same ez my ole Marse down dar in the South. Ain' he know what's de bes' fer his niggahs mo' dan ery one uv dem evah knowed fer hisse'f?

"An' when some uv dese yeah low lifted vote-ketchers up in New Yawk tries to tell me 'bout de wickedness

uv niggahs bein' sol' I jes ups an' tells dem dat dey's wus wickedness goin' on evy day dan bein' sol' f'om one marster dat's 'sponsible fer yer cloes an' cabin en food to anur marster what's gwine ter look out fer yo' boahed an' keep, an' dat of yer hepless chilens."

"Which shows that you certainly know how to hold your own with the politicians, Uncle Manassah," laughed Treverin.

"I think," he added smiling, "that we're going to suit each other perfectly, and now the only question is whether you can be ready by Monday to go with me out to Arizona."

"Suttinly, Marse John, any time you say. Dat'll gib me jest time to go thro' de stock wid Marse Harry. Cose, sah," explained the old man proudly, "de Senatah he's allus kep' de cellah-book—natchelly—sence I ain't much in de writin' line—but many's de time I heah him say to Marse Charl: 'M'nassah dar is de ony one au courant ob de valyuble drinkables. Dey say figgah's don't lie, but de man dat meks dem sometimes does, and I'd trus' M'nassah's mem'y ahead ob mah own figgahs any day. Yo couldn't lose track ob a single bottle ob de royal brans but what dat ar niggah would fine it out some way."

"But," added the old butler, regretfully, "de cellahs ain' what de wuz fore Miss Anne's doin's ob las' Fall."

"Indeed?" and the inquiring lift of Treverin's eyebrows inspired Manassah to another story.

"Lawdy, Marse John," exclaimed the old man with a reminiscent smile, "ain' you yeah tell 'bout dat? De papahs wuz des full ob it: pokin' fun at Miss Anne an'

dose 'Daughtahs ob Rebekah'—twel I yeah Marse Harry declah dat he gwine cyar his wimmin folks clean out 'n de kentry an' lock 'em up in a tyowah ef evah he yeah tell ob dere actions bringin' 'em befoah de public agin in sech a way.

"Marse Harry, he suttinly was riled dat mawnin' when Miss Anne telled him at de breakfas' table as how she's gwine hab a meetin' ob dose 'Daughtahs' at de house de nex' week but one an' how endurin' de meetin' dey's gwine hab de cellahs emptied clean out intu de guttahs, sence dey's all come to de conclusions as wine is baid fer de stumach, de haid an' de soul.

" 'Den why, my deah,' axes Marse Harry in dat awful quiet voice like he uses when he's turrible riled —'den why, my deah, sence you've got so fur beyant Saint Paul, what recomminded wine fur de stummick, an' so much ahead ob de Lawd what made de bes' kine fer a weddin' feas'—why, my deah, cyarn we des hab it all poahed right down de kitchen drain?'

" 'But, my deah Harry,' respon's Miss Anne, 'dey ain't no kin' ob infloo'nce in doin' it dat away!'

" 'Oh,' says Marse Harry, 'I see, but sence it's de infloo'nce dat's de main' pint, how about exercisin' it wif a double magnum ob California port!'

" 'Dat would hahdly, I feah, 'complish de same puhpose,' rejines Miss Anne lookin' kin' ob dowbtful; 'you see de Daughtahs don't often git de chance ob infloo'ncin' wid sich ole Madeiras an' Burgundys cz yourn'.

" 'I begin tu unnerstan', I think,' says Marse Harry, kin' uv thinkin', 'dese yeah Daughtahs pear tu preciate

de fac' mighty nigh ez well ez I does dat des yeah wines has been puhchased all ovah evywheres an' dat's why dere so everlastin' anxious tuh make a gran' stan' play wastin' uv um at my expense. Ah'm 'sprised, Anne, dat yo' lows yo'sef to be kerried away in sech a fashion.'

"'Harry,' says Miss Anne, awful solemn like, 'dis is a question of 'victions, my deah.'

"'Den all I kin say,' 'sponded Marse Harry, 'is dat I cyarn see no reason why yoah c'nvictions need to 'stend theirselves ez fur ez my wine cellahs.'

"'Mah deah,' sez Miss Anne 'rarin' up her haid kine ob rambunctious, 'dis is ouah fust disagreement foah yeahs!'

"Marse Harry ain't mek no kine ob answer to dat an' dere de mattah peared like it wuz gwine een; but seen Miss Ca'll lookin' across de table at her uncle blinkin' her eyes kindah wise an' den I know fo suah they's sumpin gwine fur to happen. An' fo' Gord, Marse John, it did so, fer suah.

"'Unc Manassah,' sez Miss Ca'll, 'bout five o'clock dat arternoon, 'you gwine be needed in de cellahs dis evenin'; bring de keys an' meet me by de doah at eight o'clock sharp.'

"Well, suh, Miss Anne she done gone out to a vegetarian dinnah at de house ob some intimate frien' what Marse Harry got 'scused fum attendin', count ob a turrible haid-ache, what laid him up sence six o'clock; but pears like dat haid-ache ain't las' ez long ez he's expectin' it tuh las', foah, bress yo' soul, Marse John, dar wuz Marse Harry en Marse Charl (Miss Ca'll's pa)

an' Miss Ca'll herse'f al stan'in' at de ceellah doah waitin' foah me when eight o'clock roll 'roun.

"An suah ez yuah boahn, Marse John, we spent mos' ob dat night an' ez many moah ez dey kin' steal fom dey yuthah 'gagements fur de nex' ten days fixin' up de famous ole vintages fer dat ar infloo'ence meetin' on de 'Daughtahs' an' Miss Anne.

"Miss Ca'll she done de pastin' an' patchin' ob de labels, while I he'ped Marse Henry do de mixin' an' po'in, fer we'se got tuh get de colahs jes' so fer feah some ob dem Daughtahs know too much ter git fooled; sides Miss Anne herse'f—she knows right smart 'bout wines fer a ooman. She done wrote a book once tellin' de young ladies what's jest got mah'd how de sarvin' should be done an' all 'bout de mixin' uv dese yeah outlandish cocktails. Since she jined de 'Daughtahs' Marse Charl, he done tease her monstrous 'bout dat er book twell she bleeged ter say dat she—she mos' gwine plum crazy dat she evah writ it.

"Well, ez I jes' bin' sayin', sah, Marse Harry an' me done de po'in' an Marse Charl he tended to de corks an' fo de Lawd, sah, when we done got through you could'nt a tole dem battles uv po' wine fum de real thing nohow—eben down tu de dus' an' de cobwebs.

"Den, Marse Harry, he des shipped mos' uv de real genuine impoahted wines an' rare ole brans what been stoahed in his grandfathah's cellahs foah yeahs down to Marse Charl's place in de South, 'whar,' sez he, winkin' at Miss Ca'll kin uv slow, 'we'se gwine drink de bride's health wif de *real* ahticle when you decides tuh git mah'd, mah deah!' "

"And how about the 'Daughters of Rebekah?' asked John, laughing heartily. "Were they ever any the wiser?"

"Shoh, Marse John!" And the face of Uncle Manassah puckered itself into a thousand tiny wrinkles as he shook with silent laughter. "Dey done poah out all dat ar cheap wine des ez rambunctious ez you please an' de papahs somehow got hol' ob de fac' an' begun boastin' ob how de vey guttahs was runnin' liquid gol' down des yeah streets to de Potomac an' ez how de niggahs ob Washington wuz drinkin' de health ob de 'Daughtahs ob Rebekah' at Marse Harry's expense.

"Ah reckon," and this time he laughed, softly, the rich, mellow laugh of his race, "ah reckon, Marse John, dat dey all done fergit how de real Bible Rebeckah was plum satisfied wif a well uv watah stid uv tryin' fer tuh do her infloo-ncin' wif wastin' impoahted wine."

CHAPTER IV.

"Though now he flies, ere long he shall pursue thee;
Fearing thy gifts, he, too, in turn shall bring them;
Loveless to-day, to-morrow he shall woo thee,
Though thou shouldst spurn him."
—Sappho's Hymn to Aphrodite.

THERE was a reception at one of the embassies—a comparatively small affair and certainly as exclusive as a legation "at home" could be. The majority of the diplomatic circle, some personal friends of the host and hostess from resident and official society and a few out of town guests made up the number that filled its spacious drawing rooms without overcrowding.

"The decorations are unusually attractive," remarked one woman to a friend.

"Indeed, yes!" was the quick response," and so are the gowns. Ah," raising her lorgnette," that's a lovely thing Carroll Minturn is wearing!"

"Yes, isn't it? She's awfully distinguè in black. I suppose its because of the striking contrast with the vivid gold of her hair. By the way, have you heard anything further about her engagement since that report of two weeks ago?"

"Nothing," replied the other, shortly, "and she's the kind of person one wouldn't care to ask about it even though one *had* known her for years!" The speaker's voice had a shade of reminiscent bitterness

about it that was suggestive of her having made the trial.

"Yes," rejoined her companion, sympathetically, "Carroll can be decidedly unapproachable! But, really, do you know, I should be rather surprised at her engaging herself to Beverly, even granting that he is one of the most interesting of the Senatorial eligibles, she could have done ever so much better financially and in every other way, for that matter."

"Money hardly counts, I imagine," rejoined the other, "since it's pretty generally conceded that she'll inherit Senator Carroll's millions. Ah, who is that talking with the Baroness?"

"That, oh that's young Treverin of New York—Robert Freeman's grandson—he's been spending a good deal of time in Washington lately, and Charles says (strictly *entre nous*, of course) that he's a man to be reckoned with down at the Capitol."

"Indeed!" looking more closely. "Decidedly fine looking, but he doesn't have the air of a managing politician nor that of a lobbyist, my dear."

"He doesn't belong to either type, I fancy; 'it's the man distinctly outside the ring,' Charles says, who really *does* things these days."

"Or, at least, it's his money that pulls the wires which keeps the show moving, inside!"

"Sh!" exclaimed the other, tragically. "We're actually verging on politics—taboo—anywhere but in Washington—heavens!" and she raised her eyes in mock dismay.

"That reminds me," ventured her companion, "of

Bobby Travers' latest bon mot. Some one was telling a good story on a Western Senator, whose gratuitous support of his constituents at a dinner rather amused the other guests. 'Yes,' laughed Travers, 'sometimes we imagine that we've succeeded pretty well in excluding the skeleton from the family bouquet, but now and then some one pops up with the comforting assurance that "we all know it's there." ' "

"Jolly!" exclaimed the other laughing; "I hear Bobby Travers is going to be given a pretty good berth somewhere. Was it Madrid?. I've forgotten."

"I hadn't heard, but you know he has been rusticating in the West, I understand, has recently married some beauty out there and intends taking her directly abroad. She created quite a furore of admiration in New York, I believe, but we're not to see her in Washington, this season, as Bobby only runs over for a day occasionally, on business."

"Ah, I remember hearing about it. The girl was a daughter of that eccentric Paul Swanson, who married some beautiful woman with mysteriously great connections—abroad, wasn't it?"

"I don't think anybody ever knew the details, but people said she was a bona fide princess whom Paul Swanson met during some of his world wanderings. At any rate, I remember that she died when they had been married little more than a year, leaving a daughter."

"Well, this is the girl. She was reared in a French Convent, and when she was sixteen her father brought her to America and took her West, where Bobby Tra-

vers met her. Delightfully romantic, isn't it? There's a whole story in the idea."

"Yes," drawled the other, "but Bobby Travers was always so intensely practical that it's hard to imagine him going in for idylls and things of that sort! Ah, here comes Charles and we must be off."

John Treverin, in the meantime, who had caught sight of Miss Minturn and her uncle as soon as he entered the door had been endeavoring to reach them by a somewhat slow and interrupted progress down the entire length of the rooms.

During the interval the girl herself had become aware of his presence, had realized instinctively that he was coming directly toward them and while waiting, rather curiously, to see what form his next move would take, her own interest was unconsciously quickened.

Features, clear-cut and well-defined, a determined nose—fine grey eyes that looked out at one directly, a high forhead, from which a mass of rich, dark hair (worn neither long nor too closely cropt) swept upward, adding a touch of the original to a clean-shaven face of marked distinction—such was a first impression of John Treverin, at thirty-five.

There was still about him the air of alert intelligence, of indomitable force and will-power that had characterized the boy, but one realized in the man a concentration of those abounding energies, that had developed a new faculty for organization which had not been present in the youth. It was not, perhaps, that he had changed so much as that his nature had expanded and unfolded through the broadening and deepening pro-

cesses of time. If one missed the fire of his old enthusiasm for the ideal, one felt that its place had been taken by that singleness of purpose through which alone greatness is achieved and, paradoxical as it might seem, out of the success of material enterprise the man had awakened, at last, to the full realization of his boyhood's dream.

By means of money, as the mightiest force of his time, he had come to be a controlling power in his age, a potent factor in his generation, and yet by a peculiar combination of training and native endowments he had not lost his own finer sense of relative values. A keen appreciation of the proportionate significance of wealth certain high-bred contempt for the emoluments of his position.

in the manipulation of men had not robbed him of a

He had still the gift of inspiring the affectionate fealty of his subordinates, and he had not become incapable of loyalty to his friends. It was said of him by men who had reason to know his methods that he was as "instinctively square" as he was "constitutionally unable to plot or to work in the dark," that, "while elevated sentiments were not in his line, his 'business morals' were above the average—the outgrowth of a certain manly code of his own which made even his enemies acknowledge that, 'he wouldn't lie, he wouldn't sell, and he wouldn't betray a friend.' "

Such was the man who had been making his interrupted way down the long drawing rooms and had come at last to the corner where Carroll Minturn was holding court.

"Senator Carroll, I believe!" with a note of inquiry, as he bowed in front of that gentleman, and then, without waiting for other reply than the receptive smile of the older man he went on quickly: "My name is Treverin and I had the misfortune to miss you, sir, when you called at my hotel."

"Ah!" exclaimed Senator Carroll, cordially as he extended his hand, "we have been mutually unfortunate, Mr. Treverin! Your father, my dear sir, was a very old friend of mine, and—but pardon me, I want the pleasure of presenting you to my niece, Miss Minturn. Carroll, my dear, allow me to introduce Mr. Treverin."

At the first mention of his name the girl's face lighted up with the quick flash of a warm smile.

"It can't be," she exclaimed cordially, "it can't, really, be possible that you're Elizabeth Treverin's brother!"

"But I'm more than glad to be able to assure you, Miss Minturn," he rejoined laughing, "that I am, actually, he and——" with a quick tact that won her instant personal liking, he detached the enthusiasm of her greeting from any connection with himself, and placed it, at once, where he knew it belonged—"I should certainly begin to realize, if I never had before, a lucky choice in the relationship."

"I can't imagine," she responded impulsively, "anything more delightful than to have Elizabeth Treverin for a sister."

"There are ways," he answered, with a swift, humor-

daring, "that it might be managed, even yet, if you really cared to try."

"Really, Mr. Treverin," and she smiled in instant appreciation of his very obvious point, "I might have spared you the necessity of that gallant charge! What I meant to say was that your sister was one of the dearest friends of my childhood."

"She has spoken," he answered, smiling, "delightfully of you."

"Ah," with evident pleasure, "she hasn't forgotten, then, the old days at Sœur Madeleine's!"

"She seemed to remember, especially," with a quizzical smile, "something connected with a 'prancing charger.'"

She laughed at that; a low musical laugh whose timbre appealed to him as particularly sweet.

"Elizabeth used to make such famous fairy tales 'right out of her head.' Her plots were splendid, and," with a twinkle, "she *did* know how to paint a prince! They're always rather sketchily drawn, you know, in the fairy-books—almost," with a demure smile, "as unsatisfactory as one finds them, later, in real life.

"But, tell me, Mr. Treverin, I am only just getting my bearings—is Eliazbeth? Why, of course, she *must* be—Mrs. Wood! I remember now, Aunt Anne wrote of her, by that name, last winter, when I was away. My family saw something of her while she was in Washington.

"The mystery is beginning to unravel itself, at last, and no doubt before *very* long," archily, "I'll have placed 'Mrs. Wood's representative' and—" with sud-

den interest, as the fact dawned upon her mind, "you wanted Unc M'nassah for Elizabeth!"

"You have searched me to my inmost soul," he laughed, shrugging his shoulders good-humoredly.

"Won't you tell me," she began, with a wicked little smile, "about your arduous labors in butler-hunting?"

"The tale would be too long in the telling for to-night," he rejoined quickly, as he saw that he could no longer expect to monopolize her conversation, "but I should like to see you sometimes, if I may?"
should like to see you sometimes, if I may?"

He put it in the form of a question in order that she might not evade a direct answer.

"My days are rather busy and the evenings are always full, but——" she paused, tentatively and he wondered if she were considering Beverly's rights.

"My dear," interrupted Senator Carroll's voice, "you asked me to remind you, at ten, that you had another engagement."

"Thank you, Uncle Harry. It is Anna Harrington's dance; I promised to run over for a little while," she explained briefly.

"Could you manage without me, I wonder," he began, apologetically; "I'm just in the midst of a most interesting discussion about the authenticity of that little Venetian piece that is for sale as a Whistler down town. The General says——"

"Certainly, I shall do without you," she interrupted laughing. "Mr. Treverin, no doubt, will be good enough to put me in the carriage where I shall find Marie awaiting me with an extra wrap, as usual, and

so——" graciously (for Treverin's quick 'delighted' had set the seal on her plan) "au revoir, Uncle Harry; you and the General may decide the fate of the Whistler betwen you."

"I should like to tell you, sometime," Treverin insinuated temptingly, as they stood waiting for her carriage, "the delightful ending of Uncle Manassah's romance."

"You don't mean," she exclaimed eagerly, turning upon him with shining eyes, "you *can't* mean that he has found Liza and the pickaniny, at last!"

"It appears that Liza"—she noticed that his voice was low and peculiarly sympathetic"—"it appears that Liza turned up in New York about thirty-six years ago and became my mother's maid. That is how she happened to go to Arizona, and is with my sister still."

"How glorious," she exclaimed joyously, and anxiously , "the pickaniny?"

"The pickaniny," he answered with grave sympathy, "died before Liza reached New York."

"Oh! I *am* sorry," she breathed softly. "You must tell me all about it, sometime."

"I should like to and—how soon may I call?" he asked eagerly, for he had no intention of losing the point of vantage.

"I have just remembered," she replied gravely, "that I have a free hour on Thursday, at four."

"It was good of you to remember," he replied with evident pleasure.

"Something," she responded, smiling, "something, don't you think, is due Elizabeth's brother—not to

mention the fact," she added roguishly, as the carriage drew up, "that you have a story to tell which I'm more than anxious to hear."

With which rather unsatisfactory explanation she nodded a smiling good night.

"Ah, Madmoiselle!" exclaimed her maid excitedly, as they drove away, "eet ees ze same; I haf naiver forgot zoze eyes—how ze have gleam in ze moonlight!"

"What *can* you mean, Marie?" asked Miss Minturn in quick apprehension, fearing that the maid had gone suddenly mad.

"Haf you not remember," she demanded incoherently, "ze hold-up on ze desert—ze cruel sauvage—ze pistols an' ze hold-up on ze desert—ze cruel sauvage—ze you not remember, ze young man, so cool, so brave, so strong, who haf come to ze rescue of Madmoiselle?"

"You mean," asked Carroll eagerly, "that Mr. Treverin, this man whom we have just left, was—is—he?"

"Eet eez ze face which I haf naiver forgot," replied the girl with a solemn earnestness that was quite convincing, "like ze face of un angel, so fierce, and young as ze face in ze picture over Madmoiselle's escritoire."

"You are most confusing, Marie, sighed the girl, as she leaned back among the cushions and closed her eyes for the purpose of thinking it over. "What can you possibly see in Mr. Treverin to make you think of 'St. George and the Dragon'?"

"Eet eez ze face, Madmoiselle," persisted the maid gravely as she relapsed into silence."

"He was probably diffident about receiving praise!" thought the girl, slowly, "one can see that he isn't ego-

tistical or vain and—her mind flew off at another tangent, "I see now why I couldn't place him from Clarence's description. Elizabeth never happened to mention the *name* of her grandfather.

"But how he *did* fly!" she murmured, smiling as memory reverted again to that far-away scene on a moonlit desert.

"I must ask him some day about Arizona. And I always thought—" was there a lingering regret in her mind?—"I always *used* to think that I should so like to know that man!"

CHAPTER V.

"The perception of a resemblance is often merely a failure to see differences."

MIDSUMMER found Senator Minturn and his daughter at home on a small plantation that lay along the banks of a famous old river in the South.

It was upon this tiny strip of land—all that was left him of an ancient patrimony—that he spent most of his time between sessions of Congress, alone usually with the child whose intuitive understanding of his temperament had made her the dearest companion of his solitude and the very light of his eyes.

Was it not she who had recalled him from the unprofitable pursuit of a fortune which he could never have achieved to the wholesome realities of a life which began to be satisfying as soon as he had conquered the abnormal appetite for power which had been born of the craving of his insatiable ambition? Was it not here —in this quiet little nook, in an out-of-the-way corner of the world—that he had found again the heritage of his fathers? Having once more learned "as a little child" to place a truer estimate upon fame, he had come naturally into the fulness of his birthright and that honor which is "rather to be chosen than great riches" was at last sufficient, even for him.

He loved the old place as he loved no other spot on

earth for it was to him typical. Its atmosphere fraught with the subtle charm of an era that was past, of a day that was dead, was permeated anew with the vital freshness of his daughter's womanhood which breathed the incarnate spirit of a living present.

She seemed to him never so lovely as in this simple environment where the rarer qualities of her unfolding nature were brought more conspicuously into play and, as the translucent lights of a gem of the first water are enhanced sometimes by the very absence of that setting which may be needed to bring out the excellencies of jewels of lesser worth, so, he imagined, would her character find its broadest development, its fullest expansion and its highest expression—here. For he had come, at last, to realize that the supreme triumph of Nature consists in the fact that even the process of ripening cannot rob her fruit of its bloom while the poverty of Success is its inability to preserve intrinsic values of which it is robbed by the very wealth that creates its artificial standards.

The day was warm and from where he sat in the cool shade of the wide gallery, he had just seen a steamer go by leaving in its wake a clamoring horde of noisy ripples that disturbed the peaceful calm of the river. Its passing presaged news from the outer world and the doubtful pleasures of mail. Ah there was Carroll now, coming across the lawn, her arms overflowing with papers and her hands quite full of letters. He rose and went to meet her as she came up the steps.

"I think I do need you, dearest," and she laughed

an acknowledgment of his timely assistance as she dropped into a chair.

"Those are yours and here are mine and—we'll let the papers go." She sorted out quickly a bundle of envelopes and pressed them into his unwilling hands, but when, fifteen minutes later she looked up from the perusal of her own goodly store she found him leaning back in his chair, his letters still unopened while he watched her dreamily.

"Do you know, dearest," she asked, shaking her head at him, playfully, "such a lack of interest is shocking," and, taking the envelopes from his hand, she began skillfully to open them with a tiny ivory cutter that she carried in her hair.

"The competent, businesslike method with which you get over your own troubles has filled your father with envy," he replied smiling.

"Yes, read them to me, please," he added in answer to her inquiring eyes, "the music of your voice may make their discord sweet and besides I have forgotten my glasses."

"As though you needed them except by way of excuse!" but without demurring further she began to read his mail aloud. She had a quick intuitive understanding of the political and business problems upon which the letters touched and her comments amused him almost as much as the letters themselves bored him.

"This," she said, finally, "is the last—a mere note —rather short," then, with a little start of surprise,

"it's from Mr. Treverin," and she read, rather more slowly than usual:

"My dear Senator Minturn:—As I am to be in —— on the sixteenth and am anxious to consult you, on business, of a private and personal nature, may I not hope for an appointment—even though I am well aware of my temerity in thus encroaching upon your intimate privacy at this season of the year?

"Trusting that you will pardon me for breaking so ruthlessly in upon your rest and with kindest remembrances to your daughter, believe me,

"Most sincerely yours,

"JOHN TREVERIN."

"It sounds rather mysterious," commented the girl, wonderingly. "Do you suppose it's some new move on the statehood question or—" she knew that as yet there was no other vital interest which the two men held in common.

" 'Personal and private,' sounds a trifle impressive even for statehood, daughter," and he smiled indulgently; "however," with the ready hospitality of his race, "I shall ask him over for a few days, of course, and," as he rose, "it will be necessary to write at once; tomorrow is the sixteenth. No doubt, Sambo can be spared to ride over this afternoon and leave a note at his hotel." There was a question in his voice to which she assented rather absently as he went into the house and left her alone in the wide gallery, gathering up her mail.

Three of the letters were from Beverly. He was

very exact, almost punctiluous in his observance of the outward forms of sentiment and wrote to her daily of his hopes, his aims, his plans. Sometimes she almost wished that he were less tiresomely verbose in his elaborate self-explanations. What was it, after all, that had induced her to even consider marrying this man in whom she found so much to criticize?

From the first she had been honest with herself and with him. She had confessed frankly that her ideas of marriage were distinctly modern and eminently practical; that she entirely eliminated the question of that old-fashioned sentiment called love because in her estimation the safest basis upon which to found any human relationship was that of a complete and thorough understanding. Understanding insured eternal friendship, and friendship ruled out friction and maintained the equilibrium of that intellectual intercourse which was the foundation principle of all genuine companionship. Had not Ruskin expressed the idea perfectly in a letter to Rosetti and then she had read in a clear, cool voice, without tremor of emotion:

"I am grateful for your love, but yet I do not want love. I have had boundless love from many people during my life. And in more than one case that love has been my greatest calamity. I have boundlessly suffered from it. But the thing, in any hopeful degree, I have never been able to get, except from two women, of whom I never see the only one I care for, and from Edward Jones, is 'understanding.'

"I am nearly sick of being loved—as of being hated—for my lovers understand me as little as my haters.

I had rather, in fact, be disliked by a man who somewhat understood me than much loved by a man who understood nothing of me."

"Of course," she had added calmly, "I believe in a similarity of tastes and ideas but even that point seems to me of far less importance than that the *ambitions* should not clash. Well-bred persons are accustomed to allowing one another the privilege of a difference in opinion, but where there is to be a community of material interests, would it not seem absolutely essential that both natures should reach their fullest individual development along similar lines?"

Beverly had admitted the truth of this argument and had even concurred in her expressed conviction that many matrimonial ventures were wrecked on the rocks of conflicting ambition or drifted helplessly in the counter currents of distinct and separate aspirations which might have come safely into port with colors flying had their wise skippers but carried the chart of mutual understanding and avoided the shoals of sentiment as well as the dangerous quicksands of love.

The idea had seemed to him merely a unique and rather original expression of his own point of view—a new and modern way of defining a very old and well-established relation and he had accepted it as unquestionably as he had recognized the fact that Carroll Minturn was the one woman above all others whom he cared to call his wife.

Life, so far, had developed in the girl an unfortunate confidence in her own judgment—a reliant self-poise that extended itself even to the realm of her warmest

affections. There was a protective tenderness in her devotion to her father, a gentle indulgence in her feeling for her Aunt Anne that in no way hindered a perfectly just estimate of the temperamental weaknesses and foibles which she recognized in each.

The very nobility of her natural emotions had given her the power of temporarily detaching herself from her own feelings and their object and usually, therefore, it was from the heights of reason that she found the determinative measure of comprehension .

She had known the power of love as a controlling principle of conduct but she had yet to learn its force as a mighty factor of life. Clarence Beverly had fitted almost naturally into her scheme of things. From the time of their meeting which had taken place during her first season "out," and in the earlier years of his public career, he had interested her. Although she was conscious that their natures had never touched very closely and she acknowledged the absence of that theoretical kinship of spirit upon which so many marriages had been founded in the past, she had, as yet, seen no reason for altering her view of a future that included him, and while she still refused to enter into any definite plans, they had both grown to regard her attitude as tantamount to a decision.

Almost unconsciously, however, as she sat alone on the wide gallery she was comparing the Beverly of today with the man that she had thought he was in the early months of their friendship when the glow of his vigorous personal enthusiasms had passed for the ardor of profound convictions, when the rash impetuosity

of undisciplined impulse had appeared in the guise of virile fearlessness and eager courage.

Even then he had been recognized as "a coming man" of immense energy, of great popularity, of some literary talent, and of no little oratorical power.

It was then that her heart had warmed to him, that her sympathies had responded to that boundless optimism, to that almost boyish fervor with which he had thrown himself into the conflict and had gone forth to meet his future—a future that was strikingly rich in opportunity.

But had his subsequent career fulfilled the early promise which had been given forth, had he justified the hopes that had been implanted? Already his enemies were characterizing him as an opportunist who would ride rough shod over tradition and cut across the corners of principle for personal advantage or partisan interest. Accusing him of being guided by political expediency in his support of popular measures, they denied his capacity for heroic devotion to principle and compared the zeal with which he attacked the shadow to the calculating shrewdness with which he avoided or evaded direct combat with the substance.

Even some of his friends had begun to question his sincerity while others, coldly critical, were describing his actions, as *erratic* and impulsive, *the man himself*, as heedless of precedent and lacking in calmness and sobriety of judgment. They deplored his intolerance of criticism, his lack of true dignity as well as his spectacular efforts for the maintenance of personal popularity.

Her father, she knew, had always regarded him as a man of utterance rather than of achievement, but then her father had never entertained a cordial liking for Beverly. She had wanted to believe that ineradicable political animosities lay at the root of the antipathy which was in reality personal and instinctive, but Senator Minturn's subsequent frank friendship for Treverin, who was likewise not of his party, had forever dispelled that delusion.

And she—how had she come to regard this man who had already a lien upon her future? If she had acknowledged that there was a lack of logical system in his "cultured" development," she had attributed it to what some one had described as our "national contradictions," those temperamental inconsistencies of character through which our greatest virtues and most striking defects are portrayed.

In spite of his detractors, moreover, Clarence Beverly was a man of power, and she worshiped power in the abstract; she had thought that she might love it in the concrete. She had always believed that he was essentially of the race of the Titans, that there must, therefore, come a day when he himself would look back upon his mistakes and call them "youthful vagaries;" when he would view his own extravagances with a very tolerant smile.

It was only lately that she had begun to doubt—for the gulf that separated profession from practice seemed hourly growing wider. Was he more and more becoming, as his enemies said, "the creature of his own

tongue," and "a mighty writer of words?" She herself had not found him less greedy of that which flattered his "colossal egotism" and daily he seemed to demand even from her a larger faith in his own "raw omniscience."

Had she all along mistaken his platitudes for new ideas, his commonplaces for inspired utterances, instinct with power; and his perfunctory homilies for profound thought; or was it simply that the man himself had degenerated; that he had, in the last analysis, come to be less than he was?

How lightly one might have dismissed all criticism had he been one of that type of man who "needs neither praise nor blame"; but he was far otherwise—insatiably, he demanded commendation; arrogantly, he repudiated criticism; and what hurt her most was the fact that she knew herself to be growing more sensitively aware that he loved the glare of the limelight; that he had almost lost the keen pleasure of *living* in the childish consciousness of *posing.*

How strange that she was going to marry a man like this when she had always regarded the "passion for notoriety" as horribly vulgar as it was hopelessly common; when she had always considered the surest test of breeding to lie in its inherent capacity for reserve.

She roused herself, at last, from speculations that were becoming daily more painful and went to give orders that Sambo should be in readiness to deliver her father's note, and that a guest chamber should be prepared in the event of Treverin's coming on the morrow.

Sambo was evidently disgruntled at the prospect of "company," and she heard him voicing his complaints to Martha as she passed, later, under the kitchen windows on her way out to the garden.

"Seem lak we all gwine hab some high falutin' gent'man fum de No'th hangin' 'round' yere ebery summah. Dat young Marse Beverly, las yeah, mos' wa' de whole place out wif his rarin' an' plungin' an' his fine clo's what mek him sech a trouble to hise'f an' a heap sight mo' tuh me."

It was true. She remembered how Beverly had insisted upon pitching hay until he was completely worn out and disheveled; how Sambo had spent the best part of the following day freshening up the sorry looking raiment with which he had graced the occasion while she had devoted herself to smoothing down her lover's ruffled spirits. For, contrary to Clarence's expectations, the haying had proved a fiasco. Instead of a brilliant little grandstand play which might elsewhere have elicited a round of applause, his performance had been described as "annoying;" he himself as a perfect nuisance, and but for the fact of his being her father's guest, he might have been considered officiously "in the way."

Likewise, when he had insisted during the following week upon tramping home from the village in a heavy downpour of rain even though he had been offered "a lift" in a neighbor's carriage, he had been characterized as a "fool" instead of lauded as a "hero."

He had spoiled the servants by commending them too highly for duties which they were well paid to per-

form; and had outrageously tipped them for carrying out her orders and, to cap the climax, in a grand finale of supreme tactlessness, he had allowed the papers all over the country to get hold of the story of his rustic exploits, dragging in a minute description of their quiet little home that had infuriated her father even more than the glaring headlines in which Senator Minturn had been characterized (in his rural retreat) as "a modern Cincinnatus."

The summer had, on the whole, been so thoroughly disappointing and Beverly himself so aggressively wearing and unfortunately obnoxious that no one had been sorry to see him go, and in self-defense she had told him that hereafter he might come to Lennox, where she spent the Fall with her Aunt Anne—but under no circumstances was he ever again to "invade the South."

Poor Sambo, no wonder he groaned at the mere remembrance of his woes, but she laughed softly to herself as she pictured the old negro's surprise when his proverbial pessimism should at last allow him to admit a difference between the two "gent'men fom de No'th."

For Treverin and Beverly were as unlike—she confessed—as it could be possible, perhaps, for strong men to be. Indeed had they been less strikingly dissimilar, it is more than probable that both could not have held, at this time, so vital a place in her interest.

Quite naturally it had come about since that first meeting for Treverin to establish himself in their circle. As Elizabeth's brother, he had claimed and held

his own with her. As the son of an old and dear friend, and perhaps also because they were fellow-enthusiasts on the subject of prints, he had won Senator Carroll's liking; while between Senator Minturn and the young man there was already a sort of cordial off-hand *bonhommie* such as she had never known her father to entertain for any one. Even their political differences had the remarkable effect of drawing them together, although they were admittedly at one only on the statehood issue, and she had been amazed to hear her father declare that Treverin's republicanism in New York stood for just about the same thing as his own diametrically opposite affinities in the South; "the better element united against the worse; the stronghold of purer politics withstanding the onslaught of greater corruption."

And thus it had gradually come to pass that Treverin's dark, smooth-shaven face and well-knit athletic figure were frequently seen in Aunt Anne's drawing-room (so tactfully indeed had he won his way into the good graces of that lady that she considered him quite an interesting acquisition to the noble relays of gustatory enthusiasts who met around her dinner-table), and was a familiar and welcome visitor in the girl's winter home, although he had skillfully avoided so far any marked obtrusion upon her individual attention.

In their frequent chats together she had found him always as interested as he was interesting, somewhat quiet, but thoroughly self-contained; full of pleasant little anecdotes but rarely verging upon personal topics, and yet somehow she had known that he was strong;

intuitively but surely she had felt that underneath the surface, this keen business man, this practical person of affairs had another nature. She could even imagine that romance might some day come to nest in his heart; she almost believed that dreams had at one time beseiged his brain.

There were certain phases of life that she never discussed with Beverly because she had instinctively realized that he would be incapable of appreciating her point of view. For commonplace sentiments he had, in a way, some respect, even more, perhaps, than had she, but he was strangely unfeeling when it came to the more subtle niceties of esthetic beauty. To him the poetry in nature made little appeal and he lacked the sensitive fiber through which he might have comprehended even where he could not understand the delicate language of its intangible allurements. He was neither comtemplative by nature nor had he come into a large inheritance of thought, and there were curious blank spaces in his organization wherein the measure of his appreciation seemed to become the limit of his capacity.

Of Treverin, on the other hand, she would have been inclined to believe that "the best parts of his conversation were the things he left unsaid;" that the man in himself was convincing beyond his own power of expression.

She had not arrived at a point where she could make conscious comparisons between the two men; such an inward attitude would have savored of disloyalty, and the girl came of a race which could not lightly break

faith with its obligations. If she had been forced to define her mental processes she might probably have said that she thoroughly enjoyed the intellectual exercise of contrasting two forceful individualities for, after all, it was that certain essence of primordial strength that existed in each which had attracted her, she thought, to both; and, as yet, she did not differentiate between "the personality of genius," which might, perhaps, have been the talent of the one and the "genius of personality" which was the gift without doubt of the other.

Strength they possessed in common. Treverin's limitations she had yet to discover. Beverly's weaknesses where they existed were psychological rather than actual, and as long as her doubts were without the larger justification of definite acts, she would pin her faith to fundamentals and take a certain philosophical pleasure in the fact that Fate had granted her to know strong men.

CHAPTER VI.

"The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it."—*Macaulay.*

In reply to Santor Minturn's invitation, Treverin had written that he was not sure of being able to give himself the pleasure of more time than would be necessary for the transaction of that business which he had mentioned in his former note—but so loth was he, he added, to surrender the privilege of this charming hospitality that he begged to be allowed to leave the question an open one until the afternoon of Thursday and, in the meantime, he expected to ride over from —— some time during the morning of that day.

"It would almost seem," remarked the girl with a puzzled little smile, as she handed back the note which her father had given her to read, "it would almost seem as though the result of the conference were to determine his decision." In spite of herself she began to be curious and she was not a woman given to indulgence in idle questioning.

On the following morning, Treverin arrived—somewhat earlier than he was expected and found her cutting roses in the garden. She looked up quickly at the sound of horses' hoofs in the path just beyond, but the inquiring eyes that met his own were confidently calm as she gave him her hand with a cordial smile,

"This quite convinces me," she said lightly, "that you have seen, at least, one bona fide sunrise."

"Yes, I left—before day-break. I wanted," he added explanatorily, "to realize the freshness of a Southern dawn."

"Are you quite sure," she asked hospitably, "that you aren't ready for what the darkies call 'secon' breakfas'? It's a long ride to have made by ten o'clock."

"Did the early bird ever fail to find a worm," he asked, laughing. "I discovered mine in a tiny cabin away back on the road. I wonder," he added speculatively, "if I'll ever taste such corn pone again?"

"If it was old Aunt Sally's hoe-cake, I doubt it," she rejoined merrily. "I ride before breakfast myself, and I've discovered the advantages of that road."

"And so you know the joys of a fresh horse, when the day is young," he exclaimed quickly. "I used to ride, in the early morning, years ago, out West."

"Did you like the West?" she queried, "I have wanted to ask you so many times."

"It is a wonderful country with magnificent opportunities and I revere it, almost, I think, as the birthplace of my highest aspirations."

"I believe," she answered slowly, "that I feel very much that way about the South—no place else have I ever come nearly so realizing what it means to be, "Heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time.' "

"Ah, I can appreciate that point of view," he rejoined with instant sympathy, "because this is, in a

very personal and peculiar sense the land of your forefathers!"

"That is the reason my father loves it and, as you know, he is not at all afraid of the sentiment of expressed enthusiasm even in this materialistic age, but I love it as much," she hesitated, for she was not in the habit of defining her emotions, "I think for its present as for its past significance. Here one can get into the closest touch with the genuine realities of nature, and this is the only spot on earth where I feel intensely alive."

"I can imagine," he replied gravely, "what it must mean to you!"

His eyes wandered slowly over the sweet, old-fashioned garden and then came back to the trim loveliness of the woman who stood among the roses.

She wore a simple little gown whose severe lines accentuated the exquisite grace of her girlish figure. Its very material which he would have thought charaterless on another woman seemed eloquent of personality in every clinging fold.

He knew himself to be under the spell of a passion that still slumbered; he understood that hers was the awakening touch that could call it into life, but even had he been positive of her competency to care for him with all the intensity and energy of which he believed her capable, by nature, John Treverin realized that only by guarding her from the inspirational power of that psychological moment, which must discover to them both the dangers and temptations of the situation, could he hold himself worthy of a love which he would

have given his soul to win. If he hoped that chance might some day give him the right to fathom those hidden depths which lay beneath the calm serenities of her emotions, he was still wise enough not to dare Fate to arouse the tempestuous grandeur of a storm whose force might not be spent in its own tumultuous profundities.

And, therefore, because he was eminently practical and knew the peril of playing with fire, John Treverin was relieved when the girl changed the subject to a safer topic than that of intense living.

"And yet you didn't remain in the West?" she ventured tentatively.

"No," he returned humorously, "like the aspiring disciple of modern realism, I thought to at first establish my own canons of art in conformity to certain ideal conceptions and personal tastes. Since then—" he paused, as though debating whether she were sufficiently interested to care to have him go on.

"Since then?" There was no mistaking the look of absorbed attention that had crept into her eyes; it was the first time that this man had ever spoken intimately of himself.

"Since then," with a whimsical smile, "I have been devoting myself to a study of technique, for it is only, I think, by bringing the standards of the past to meet the needs of the present that a man may hope to master the art of life."

"And what, I wonder," she suddenly exclaimed, "would a man like you call the art of life."

"Happiness," he rejoined, with a moment's hesita-

tion, "and," with a reminiscent, tolerant smile, "fortunately for me I was pulled up short before I had pursued it far along the lines of those wilful vagaries that have filled the galleries of time with impressionistic daubs that are nothing more nor less than puerile developments of our own misplaced enthusiasms."

"I like your philosophy," she answered smiling. "it's delightfully near to Kipling's own. Do you remember the lines, apropos of a cub in the pride of his earliest kill? 'But the jungle is large and the cub he is small, let him think and be still.' "

"It isn't philosophy with me," he replied dubiously, "I'm afraid it's only experience.

"But won't you tell me," he added, quickly changing the subject, "something about this delightful country." He glanced swiftly about him with that keen appreciative interest which always attracted her, and added: "It is fascinating here."

"This is the dearest place in the world," she exclaimed warmly.

And then because she saw that he could feel the charm of their surroundings she repeated the story of the house whose substantial simplicity had stood with the magnificent forest trees that shaded its wide lawns as a silent witness of the centuries.

She related some of the history that had been made when grim war stalked through the broad fields of waving blue grass beyond: when the noise of shot and of shell had risen above the gentle drone of the bee and the swift whirr of the humming bird that flitted about

them as they walked through the drowsy summer morning.

"I suppose," he ventured, presently, "this is where you mostly write."

"But you are entirely mistaken," and she laughed softly, "because this, as I have just told you, is where I—mostly— live."

"Then you wouldn't quite agree with that other literary personage who has declared himself 'never sure of life unless he finds literature in it'?"

"Dear me, no," and her eyes twinkled merrily; "I'd much rather believe—to parody Thoreau—that when life becomes the poem one would have writ, then fools alone will try to utter it. But you are, please to remember, Mr. Treverin, that I don't belong with literary personages."

"You haven't allowed me, yet," he rejoined, laughing, "to discover that fact for myself. Do you think it quite fair," in an injured tone, "never to tell me

"Perhaps it's because I've decided," she rejoined demurely, "that it isn't wise to help one's friends to discover one's limitations."

"Don't you think that genius is a gift to be shared with other people?" he asked, ignoring the implication.

"By all means, but half a talent isn't worth dividing."

"Since you take yourself with so little seriousness, I wonder why you adopted writing as a vocation."

"But really, I am in earnest Mr. Treverin, when I

say that I believe writing to be only an avocation with most women.

"You see," she went on rapidly with an adorable attempt at gravity, "I'm speaking impersonally of the sex, you see. Woman hasn't yet found herself, and, when her mind happens to be active, she simply has to have an interest. Therefore if she doesn't happen to be enthusiastically fond of society, isn't particularly keen on athletics, hasn't the duties of housekeeping or motherhood to keep her out of mischief and eccentricity (he wondered if she were thinking of her Aunt Anne), what is there left *but* literature? Is it not the only form of art that can be pursued entirely in secret?" and she shrugged her shoulders and threw out her hands with a pretty little gesture of well-feigned despair as she finished her apology for the sex.

"Happy is the man who has found his work," quoted Treverin, laughing down at her from his superior height.

"That is just the trouble," she argued, "those trite platitudes don't apply to woman at all. She may search in vain for her work, hoping and trusting that it is bound up somewhere in the bundle of life only at last to discover it, lost in some man's career."

"Lost?" with a quizzical smile; "could that be possible unless the career proved to be only a sort of 'pancing charger.' I wonder (there was a grave challenge in his eyes) if the woman *always* ignores the relative importance of the man?"

"Not at all," she returned lightly, "you seem to for-

get that a charger occasionally creates the excitement of throwing his rider."

"And it is not often," he returned gravely, "that one hears of a woman who can throw a charger."

"Unless she is very foolish," with a demure smile, "she allows the rider to handle his own mount."

"Then you no longer refuse to admit," with an enigmatical expression, "that the rider has some place in the story?"

"I—I don't exactly know what you might mean." She was flushed and slightly trembling. Never had he seen her so nearly moved; never had she been so exquisitely appealing. In the first startled loveliness of an awakening fear she seemed far more beautiful than he had ever thought her in the sweet assurance of a calm repose.

With a sudden thrill of emotional exhilaration he realized that they were very near the danger line and, with every fibre of his being, he longed to cross it now.

She, on the other hand, felt sure that he understood nothing of her relations with Beverly, and yet somehow the arrow had gone home. Had not she herself been questioning the relative significance of the man: would her old childish enthusiasm for the charger always satisfy?

"Pardon me, Miss Minturn," he exclaimed quickly, "for a more than foolish play upon words and for my very presumptuous use of a privileged glimpse into your childhood."

"As well as for a lucky guess at the weakness of my

womanhood?'' she questioned archly, for she had completely recovered her usual self-possession.

''To err is human, to forgive, womanly.''

''You are almost forgiven,'' she said slowly, as she met his smiling eyes.

''But not acquitted?'' he persisted earnestly.

''It is hardly my province,'' she rejoined gravely, ''to absolve you for speaking truth.''

''You are generous,'' he returned lightly.

''I am simply just,'' and then she smiled as she led the way into the house.

Senator Minturn greeted the young man warmly, almost affectionately, and shortly afterwards luncheon was served in a spacious old-fashioned dining room, furnished in mahogany, whose rich claret colored surfaces seemed to glow with the warmth of countless vigorous rubbings.

It was not until after the meal was over and Carroll had left the two men alone in her father's library that Treverin mentioned the object of his visit. Then he came to his point with that simple directness which was his most striking characteristic.

His enthusiasm about the place had delighted the older man, who was expressing the hope that his guest might decide to remain with them for a few days, at least, when Jack replied:

''Pray don't tempt me too far, sir! For until you know my object in seeking this interview the question of my remaining longer must still be held in abeyance.

''The facts are, Senator,'' and he leaned forward slightly and faced the older man squarely, ''I love your

daughter, sir, and——" the grey eyes flashed while the firm jaw set itself a little more decidedly—"I have concluded not to give her up until she bears another man's name."

"My dear sir," replied the older man simply, "I wish I could tell you how sorry I am!"

"Which means, I suppose," replied Treverin, gravely, "that you think I haven't the ghost of a chance, that you consider the proposition absolutely hopeless?" and then, without waiting for a reply, he went on quickly: "I am prepared for that point of view, my dear Senator. I have never had any reason for supposing that I could win your daughter, but——" he paused for a brief instant and then added tentatively: "I have a feeling that the Fates will give me a chance some day to make at least the attempt."

"It is only just to tell you, Mr. Treverin," returned the older man slowly, "that, although my daughter has permitted no formal announcement of the fact, she has practically given her promise to marry another man."

"I wonder if you will understand me," and for the first time a humorous smile played about the corners of John Treverin's mouth, "I wonder if you will understand me, sir, when I tell you that this is not a surprise, that I was aware of the situation even before I met your daughter, but—can you forgive the repetition?—I shall not give her up until she bears another man's name."

"And what, I wonder, is your idea," exclaimed Senator Minturn curiously. "Your mode of attack is, I

confess, straightforward, and, frankly, had you made an earlier entrance into the lists I admit that you would have found no personal champion of Senator Beverly in me. But, as the situation is today, there are complications. My daughter is not free and, even though I might wish otherwise, I should be in honor bound to expect her to fulfill her obligations."

"You are entirely right, my dear Senator Minturn," returned the younger man earnestly, "and I should like you to believe that I shall assume no other position than this which is alone worthy of yourself and of your daughter.

"There is only one ally," he went on rapidly, "of whose aid I should like to feel assured."

"And that ally?" asked Senator Minturn smiling.

"That ally, my dear Senator, is 'Time.' "

"I have decided," returned the older man quietly, after one swift moment of thought, "I have decided to trust you with a small share of my daughter's confidence." He paused again, as though weighing the matter carefully, and then added slowly. "She has refused to entertain the thought of marriage for at least ten more months."

"Thank Heaven for the fact," exclaimed the young man fervently, as he wrung the other's hand. "And thank you, my dear sir," he added simply, "for honoring me with this confidence."

CHAPTER VII.

"Lord Henry, also, liked to be superior,
As most men do, the little or the great;
The very lowest find out an inferior,
At least they think so, to exert their state
Upon: for there are very few things wearier
Than solitary Pride's oppressive weight,
Which mortals generously would divide,
By bidding others carry while they ride."

—*Byron.*

"AND how," suggested Senator Minturn with a whimsical smile. "I wonder how a man, so handicapped, could extract any comfort from time."

"To time," replied Treverin, grimly, "I look for Beverly's opportunity to prove himself unworthy. In ten months, my dear Senator," with a confident smile, "the man will without doubt hang himself."

"I wish I might be as sure of it," answered the older man with an involuntary sigh. "I find no tangible reason as a backing for my strong dislike, and yet, so thoroughly convinced am I that this man will never make my daughter happy, that I should welcome, almost, any positive proof of his moral inferiority."

He was grave, intensely earnest, and spoke slowly, from a full heart. Dignified, proud and of that courtly bearing, traditional of the Senate of the old school, the father of Carroll Minturn was not a man to give

his confidence lightly, but he had long felt a cordiality that bordered on affection for the younger man, and it needed but the inspirational power of this new sympathy to strengthen the bond between them into something deeper than ordinary friendship.

In Treverin's voice there was considerate tenderness mingled with that fine veneration which he had always felt for this typical Southerner of an older time, whose high ideals and high spirit went hand in hand with gentle manners, but his words were essentially of his age and of his time.

"This apostle of righteousness, my dear Senator," he replied skeptically, "has been many things to many men, but he is far too clever, I imagine, to allow himself to be proven morally inferior."

"And yet," returned the older man with some heat, "even conceding that he has it letter-perfect, does he not offend repeatedly against the spirit of the moral code as well as against that higher code of the spirit (one might call it), which has always obtained among gentlemen, sir, which has invariably been recognized among what one used to call men of honor?"

The word "sir," as Senator Minturn used it, seemed capable of certain delicate nuances, of unsuspected shadings and gradations of meaning. It had been said of him in his youth, that no man had a truer sense of social proportions. His fine consideration for older persons of his own sex was as distinctive as was his deferential reverence for women. Both were, no doubt, the outgrowth of the same root and were essentially characteristic of the man whose keen sense of relative

values could give to an ordinary mark of respect or courtesy the larger significance of an appreciation. It had always meant something therefore to hear Chalton Minturn address an older man as "Sir." For an equal in age and position the title stood merely as a form of address—the simple substitution of a name. It could express extreme coldness, mild enthusiasm, affectionate cordiality or gentle tolerance; could be tempered with firmness or elevated into warm fervor while still being addressed to men on an equal footing in the same plane. For an inferior, on the other hand, the simple word merely suggested the existence of a gulf; marked its width or fixed an immeasureable distance, an impassible barrier, in inverse ratio usually to the ability of the person addressed to distinguish a resemblance from a difference.

Treverin had recognized the fervor of an appeal in the last words of the older man, an appeal from the laxity of what Senator Minturn called "a degenerate present" to the standards of that ideal "past" of which he was a survivor, and his tone was vibrant with sympathy as he said.

"Granting, my dear Senator, that Beverly is an offender against the spirit of the moral code; that he knows nothing of that higher code of spirit which obtains among gentlemen and men of honor—granting that his breeding matches his quality (and I am not the man to deny it)—even admitting that no man has a slighter sense of obligation, that no politician is more callous, that his party maneuvers would make the most sophisticated of bosses blush, still, Clarence Beverly is

a man of power, a product of the forces of his age, an apotheosis of the spirit of the Nation and—" he paused a moment, then added thoughtfully—"the god of this generation is power; its ethics is success."

"It is quite evident, Mr. Treverin, that you do not underrate your antagonist," exclaimed the Senator, smiling, "and yet," there was a shade of anxiety in his tone, "I wonder how you can imagne that a man who has so successfully imposed himself upon the rest of the world will be unable to hold his own with a woman."

John Treverin threw his head back and laughed softly before he replied.

"My dear Senator, I am confident that I am not mistaken in Beverly's caliber—I have had proof of his limitations and pray do not think me presumptuous, sir, when I add that I believe I realize enough of your daughter's nature to know that it will sooner or later impose some test which Beverly cannot meet."

"You have referred to some proof," suggested the older man tentatively; "I should like to have it, if only as a corroboration of what I have already felt."

"I have spoken of nothing that has any bearing upon his morals, political or otherwise. Indeed, as I said only a moment ago, I think it would be difficult to penetrate that armour. What I have in mind was a very trifling incident that came within the range of my observation. It is in fact quite too trivial to mention."

His tone was final, and it was quite evident that he did not care to go on.

"And yet in some way," said the Senator, holding

him firmly to the point, "this apparently trivial incident helped to establish your opinion of the man?"

"Yes," admitted Treverin reluctantly, "although I can assure you, sir, that I know men with whom it wouldn't count."

"But with you?" persisted the old man eagerly.

"With me," Treverin was honestly frank at last and spoke without further reservation, "with me it simply damned him."

"Tell me about it, please," and in Senator Minturn's tone there was the quiet force of a righteous demand. For a moment the room was very still. Blush roses nodded just beyond the wide windows through which their fine fragrance drifted on a gentle breeze that brought also the heavier scent of the jasmine and sweet odors of the honeysuckle vines that clung about the casement. (It seemed but an intangible survival—this subtle aroma—of more definite realities, and yet it held the commingled essence of an old-time loveliness that had come down to them out of the past.)

"My code of honor," began Treverin quietly, "brands, without further hearing, the person who is capable of mistaking the man who is not a fool for a fool, as well as the person who is guilty of failing to apprehend that the slightest confusion on his part between a gentleman and a menial is damning."

"Ah!" exclaimed Senator Minturn. There was sympathy in his tone and a thrill of slow satisfaction, for John Treverin had at last responded to his appeal from "the laxity of a degenerate present" to the standards of his ideal "past."

"My estimate of Senator Beverly," went on John Treverin quickly, "was formed about three years ago. There was a secret and confidential mission abroad which my grandfather had undertaken to carry through for the Government. It had been found necessary to secure the services of a man of some training and experience in international law who should be absolutely trustworthy, generally known as having no business affiliations with us and usually thought of as bearing no definite commission from the government. Just such a man, in fact, as was then acting, I was told, in the capacity of private secretary to Senator Beverly, who, it was suggested, would, no doubt, be willing to spare him for such a purpose. Without delay, therefore, I made an appointment to talk the matter over at Beverly's office, and came down to Washington, where I found the Senator very obliging and entirely ready to cooperate in our plans, providing the secretary himself were willing to undertake the mission. Having courteously suggested, moreover, an immediate conference, to which, of course, I readily assented, Beverly leaned over, touched a bell and added thoughtfully that he should leave us alone together as soon as he had introduced Mr. A——. It is needless to tell you that I was already prepossessed in Beverly's favor.

"And now for the secretary!"

Jack Treverin paused for a moment after the exclamation and then went on evenly.

"I had been led to believe, my dear Senator, that Mr. A—— was a gentleman. Of his mental equipment and qualifications I had already assured myself; and, as to

his social status, if I were to mention his name in connection with his birthplace it would suggest to you the bluest blood that our country can boast. But even had a stranger been ignorant of these facts the bearing of the man would, alone, have been conclusive evidence that he was worthy of his ancestry, for there was about him an air of distinction which is far from ordinary, a look of breeding which is most unusual.

"Imagine, therefore, my surprise, sir, when, in response to a summons which you or I would reserve for a servant, the secretary walked into the room.

"The man's face was a study," went on Treverin in an even tone, seeming not to notice the sudden gleam of anger that had leapt into the Senator's eyes; appearing not to hear the quick indignant exclamation that had escaped the Senator's lips. "It made me think of the old adage, 'No decent, sensible or well-bred man will e'er insult thee and no other *can*.' As for his hands, I could have sworn, my dear sir, that the clenched stillness and fierce control of those hands left the record of nail prints to mark the right royal ruling of a passionate spirit," finished Treverin with frank enthusiasm.

"So Clarence Beverly," flashed Senator Minturn, with unfeigned contempt, "is the sort of man who, 'clothed with a little brief authority, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep'!"

"Beverly performed the introduction," continued Treverin with a reminiscent smile, of humorous tolerance, "and then added with a pomposity so ridiculous,

that it was almost laughable, 'You will remain with Mr. Treverin, Mr. A—— and learn from him the object of his errand.'

"It might interest you, Senator, to know," added Jack Treverin, presently, "that I learned afterward enough about Mr. A—— to assure me that my first impressions had been true. An unlucky combination of circumstances, it seems, had deprived the man of that supremacy to which he was entitled by birth and had compelled him to submit to indignity rather than run the risk of losing that competency which could keep him and those dependent upon him free from the burden of debt. A few years later, however, I understand, that his fortunes changed and he became entirely independent of Beverly's patronage."

"I can imagine," replied Senator Minturn with a keen glance into Jack's face, "that the mission and you had something to do with that."

"It was A——'s ability, I assure you, my dear Senator," rejoined the other without a moment's hesitation, and his quick disclaimer of altruistic motives did not displease the older man, "even Beverly accorded a certain amount of generous recognition to his secretary's *mental* gifts. It was only his peculiar limitations that prevented a true appreciation of the *quality* of the man."

"And do you think, Mr. Treverin," demanded Senator Minturn with some warmth, "that I shall ever consent to my daughter's marrying a man like that?"

"I beg your pardon, Senator," returned Jack, earnestly as he leaned forward suddenly and placed one

hand on the arm of the other's chair, "but I would rather you didn't use this information I—" he waited a moment and then went on—"Just before making the inadvertent remark which introduced this subject, I suggested, I think, that I meant to play fair."

"I shall promise," returned the older man quietly, "to use this knowledge only in a last extremity after," and he smiled whimsically, "you have given to Time and to Beverly the full benefit of a doubt that no longer exists. But if it ever became necessary," and his flashing eyes looked directly into Treverin's own, "to save my daughter from that soul tragedy which makes havoc of a refined woman's happiness—I refer, sir, to marriage with a spiritual plebeian—then, sir, I should use it as surely as I should use the only means at hand to pull a drowning man from a whirlpool.

"I know my daughter, Mr. Treverin." His fine head was erect and he spoke with the noble pride of his race. "She may have been wilful in leaning too far to her own judgment; she has not been wise in depending so entirely upon her own estimate of the essentials in life; but there are times, sir, when blood speaks, and her blood could forgive almost any crime more easily than this."

"So be it, then," returned the young man gravely. "I wonder, sir," he added after a moment of silence, "what you think now about my accepting your delightful invitation. Do you imagine that I can afford to give myself one more day, at least?" His lips smiled but his eyes were thoughtful.

"I can trust you," returned Senator Minturn, with

frank simplicity, as he put out his hand; "I can trust you in this matter, Mr. Treverin, as I hardly dare to trust myself."

"Friendship shall be the watchword, sir," smiled Treverin whimsically. "Friendship to the last ditch, and then, please heaven, love."

"May God grant it!" exclaimed the older man fervently.

CHAPTER VIII.

"God, give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and willing hands,
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking.
For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! freedom weeps;
Wrong rules the land, and waiting justice sleeps."

FOUR days later, when Treverin took leave of Senator Minturn and his daughter, the outward relation of the young people was, apparently, unchanged. The girl herself, perhaps, was conscious of a slight chill of disappointment in the fact that Treverin—whom she had suspected of a large capacity for friendship as well as of caring very much to establish some such relation between himself and her—should have made so little headway when opportunity was given.

It was, she thought, his absolute freedom from self-consciousness that had always attracted her most; yet here, somehow, he seemed to be so constantly on guard, and so strangely afraid of spontaneity as to appear, almost, to be reining in his truant sympathies.

Between the young man and her father, on the other hand, she had noticed the steady growth of mutual understanding and confidence. Of their swiftness of mental touch, she had always been more or less aware and it was this quality, she knew, which lay at the root of her father's deepest affections, just as the lack of it was the foundation principle of his most violent antipathies. With the sureness of a woman's intuition, moreover, she realized the presence of some new sympathy whose existence had changed the quality of their relation; which had in it, now, some suggestion of the heart, although, as formerly, the secret of their attraction was not less essentially of the mind. It seemed to her, at times, as though her father were coming gradually to lean upon the judgment of the younger man; to rely, almost, upon his decisions.

Even in so small a matter as the day of Treverin's departure, Senator Minturn had acquiesced in his guest's decision—that it would be impossible for him to remain longer than Monday—without the usual gentle urging that had always characterized his proverbial hospitality. Where she had expected him to be pressing he had not even entered the most formal protest, but had simply responded with a "Do exactly as you think best, my dear Jack."

The cordial cameraderie of that particular form of address had not been the least of her many surprises, for, never in her life, had she known her father to honor so recent an acquaintance with the intimate use of his family nickname. It had been one of Clarence's pet grievances, indeed, that he was still most punctili-

ously kept on a "my dear Senator Beverly" basis, even in the informal privacy of their inner home-circle.

There was some mystery behind this new bond of union that she did not pretend to understand, although she found herself wishing vaguely that her father would volunteer an explanation—for which she would not have asked—of that business about which Treverin had written just prior to his coming.

Jack was just gone; he had turned and waved them a last good-bye when his horse had reached the crest of the hill, and the girl, with a sudden yearning for companionship which she did not at all understand, slipped her hand through her father's arm and began to pace with him slowly up and down the long veranda.

"You enjoyed him, dearest!" she exclaimed with impulsive enthusiasm. "Without question, he is one of the most versatile and interesting men I have ever known."

"John Treverin is *more* than interesting, daughter," corrected Senator Minturn quietly. "He has the fibre of a gentleman with the quiet strength and forceful simplicity of a thoroughly manly man."

"Which means," she returned lightly, although she was conscious of a sharp twinge of regret that her father had never spoken so unreservedly in praise of Beverly, "which means, dearest, that you and Mr. Treverin have many traditions and some tastes in common; that, since thought is an inheritance with you both, your ideas frequently harmonize, even though you sometimes differ in opinion."

"It seems to me, daughter, that you have gotten at

the root principle of all true friendships, and is it not also the only safe basis for any real love?" asked her father gravely, as he laid his other hand over the fingers that rested on his arm.

"I'm so glad, dearest," and she reached up quickly and lightly patted his cheek, "that I don't have to worry about love, except——" she corrected hastily when she saw that a shadow had darkened his eyes—"except as a very definite feeling for you, of whose depth, *padra mia,* I have always been *very* very sure."

"And are you finding friendship entirely satisfying, daughter?" he asked gently.

Only once had she ever attempted to define for her father something of the nature of her sentiment regarding Beverly and the look of pain and horror with which he had received the communication haunted her still, sometimes, in memory. Her explanation that Clarence understood and was perfectly satisfied was so far from an alleviation to his very evident misery that the subject had never since then been mentioned between them. Before leaving it, however, Senator Minturn had told her plainly, "as a parental duty," he had said, that he considered marriage upon such a basis a travesty and a sacrilege; he had warned her, moreover, that eventually her true nature must assert itself, and condemn all such sophistry as untrue and unworthy.

She understood, therefore, exactly, the meaning that lay behind that last question which he had been too delicately tactful to put more directly.

"Not always, dearest," she had replied truthfully, and he noticed that a flash of troubled doubt had crept

into the clear eyes, "but usually where a friendship seems not quite satisfying the difficulty, I find, lies chiefly with myself." She hesitated a moment, then went on thoughtfully: "I believe I'm inclined to expect too much, dearest, like the child, I'm afraid, who cried for the moon." Her smile was half humorous and half sad, for it was bitterness to acknowledge, even to herself, the dawn of her disillusions, or was it only the flight of her more definite illusions?

"A woman, daughter," answered Senator Minturn with gentle firmness, "never cries for the moon when she is entirely happy; the child's ignorance entitles it to indefinite ambitions, but a woman's knowledge demands more definite satisfaction."

Rather curiously she remembered, just then, how she had asked Treverin only last night if he ever felt tempted to cry for the moon. He had been resting idly on his oars at the time with his eyes upon the crescent that hovered over the river and she had wondered if it were only the wierd reflection of an uncertain light that gave such a strange and peculiar power to the expression of his eyes when he replied, somewhat enigmatically, it had seemed to her, at the time.

"If I haven't cried for it, it isn't that I don't want it, you know, but rather, I fear, because I'm one of those sublime egotists who expects to realize his ambition some day; for I have, my dear Miss Minturn," he had added humorously, "unbounded faith in that bright particular star which is supposed to guide a man in the achievement of his destiny."

Her father was also thinking of something Treverin

had said to *him* later in the same evening (after the girl had told them "good-night") of the frank way in which the younger man had acknowledged that he was really compelled to go because he didn't dare trust himself to stay.

"The fact is, sir," he had declared with a gravity which had caused the older man to smile under cover of the darkness, "I'm far more violently and helplessly in love than I realized and you can't imagine what it means, my dear Senator, to be with your daughter, to be so constantly near her, without the power to speak and to tell her what I feel!"

It was true. All the romance which lay at the root of John Treverin's nature, germinating through the years, beneath the stern surface of a hard business career, had developed in the sunshine of this woman's presence, a sudden splendor of efflorescent bloom that completely amazed the man whose practical mind had planned first for the green leafage of a normal and logical friendship.

His determination not to tell the girl of his attitude toward herself until she should first (of her own accord) have broken with Clarence Beverly, was the outgrowth of a profound conviction that it would have been both unchivalrous and unkind to complicate the issues before she, by her own discovery of a vital mistake, should have completed the difficult task of finding herself. He believed, moreover, that he understood something of the mental processes through which she had allowed herself to become the fiancee of his rival, and the motive of his Quixotism was a generous wish

to shield the woman he loved from the overmastering power of his own passion rather than a desire to spare a man whom he considered unworthy of consideration.

He had made, therefore, no effort to kindle her interest nor had he attempted to awaken her love and yet, strangely enough, Carroll Minturn had come under the spell of his self-contained reserve more quickly than she could have responded to any other appeal. Through his very silence she had grown to realize the latent fineness of the man as she might never have done by means of the more elaborate eloquence of speech.

Neither father nor daughter spoke for a few moments after Senator Minturn's last remark; he, because he wanted her to have time to realize the full significance of his words; she, because she felt the inadequacy of such a reply as it would be possible for her to make.

Presently, however, she ventured a change of subect with the tentative question:

"Were you and Mr. Treverin plotting the discomfiture of your enemies in the anti-joint statehood campaign? I rather fancied," with a demure smile, "that those frequent private conferences meant mischief."

She had withdrawn her hand from his arm and was reaching up to break a spray of honeysuckle from the vine that encircled one of the pillars of the portico. Apparently she was more absorbed in the operation than in their desultory conversation and yet her father knew how intently she was listening for his reply.

"Perhaps they did," he replied with a twinkle as he pinched her cheek, "but I am so very sure that what

we said could not interest you just now, at least, that I don't intend to bore you by repeating it. I shall tell you instead," he added mischievously, "about the new point of attack that Senator Beverly and his colleagues will adopt at the next session. They have quite determined, it seems, to force joint statehood upon Arizona and New Mexico, whether the territories will or no, and the battle over it promises to be exciting."

He laid his arm across her shoulders affectionately, and began again their slow promenade, during which he told her with quivering nostril and flashing eye of the forthcoming political contest. Something of the history of the bill, for the joint statehood of Arizona and New Mexico, which had passed the lower House of Congress at the last session and had been so narrowly defeated in the Senate, the girl already knew. That Beverly in the van of the majority had stood loyally with that clique known as Administration Senators, in all the many statehood battles, while her father, a strong and impassioned leader of the minority had as strenuously opposed the measure from its earliest inception, she was also fully aware. She had never known Senator Minturn to discuss the question with her lover, in private, although she was cognizant of the fact that he had more than once pilloried Beverly in forensic debate for an attitude which he professed to be unable to understand.

Until Treverin's advent she had instinctively held herself aloof from the issues that divided the two men in whose careers she was most vitally interested, believing that the differences between them were engendered

by an opposition that was essentially political and, therefore, not to be eradicated. Since Jack's coming, however, her attitude had been unconsciously changing. She had been compelled to hear Treverin's discussion with her father of a subject to which each man brought an individual point of view. She had been forced to consider a question upon which, even though political opponents, they had come at length, to unite. And now and then—below the surface of the argument, she caught fleeting glimpses of the characters that backed their opinions; characters whose striking similarity had been developed along lines that diverged more widely even than the tenets of their opposing political creeds. Vaguely, at last, through her growing comprehension of the grim subtleties of contrast, she began to understand how there might be some reason that was not entirely antipathetic in her father's antagonism to Beverly; some quality that made his dislike of Clarence assume for the first time a significance larger than that of prejudice.

Gradually she had come to perceive that it would be no longer possible for her to ignore the relative importance of a legislative measure against which strong men of two opposing political faiths were voluntarily choosing to range themselves. For, however innocent of ulterior motive it had been in its earliest origin, there was no denying the fact that the Hamilton bill, providing as it did, for the consolidation into a single state of Arizona and New Mexico as well as for the making of one commonwealth out of Oklahoma and Indian Territory, had, at length, in the hands of astute

politicians, who were themselves but puppets, moving in response to a master hand, become the personal instrument of an iron will and was being used, through a prostitution of the legislative function, for the furtherance of party interests.

The measure which had first been brought in as a compromise reached by members of the House Committee on Territories (without inquiring into the wishes of the Southwesterners or consulting their delegates in Congress) had, in its original form, been twice passed through the House in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Democratic minority aided by a large body of independent Republicans whose refusal to be coerced into voting contrary to their convictions, even on a partisan issue, had reduced the majority to a margin of forty-four votes.

Twice in the history of this legislative measure there had been presented to acute observers of the modern changes and latest developments in our system of popular government, the curious and impressive spectacles of absolutism, in the innocuous guise of a Committee on Rules and of despotism, backed by an authoritative "communique" from one of the most alert and autocratic politicians in the country, holding undisputed control over the House of Representatives, limiting debate, cutting off intervening motions, prohibiting amendments, and arbitrarily fixing the time for a vote.

Defeat of the bill had been both times effected in the Senate, but, so small was the margin by which victory had been achieved, and so prompt the avowal of friends and advocates of the measure of their de-

termination to renew every effort at the next session of Congress for the resuscitation and ultimate passage of the bill that the Arizonians had taken alarm and were vigorously protesting against an amalgamation to which they were opposed from geographical, racial and constitutional reasons.

Denying the moral right of Congress to force upon them the projected mesalliance because of that constitutional provision that "no new state shall be formed by the juncture of two or more states or parts of states without the consent of the Legislatures of the states as well as of the Congress," they also averred that the good faith of the Government demanded that it hold as inviolate a pledge made to them by that former Congress which had, in 1863, passed the organic act creating the Territory of Arizona, by which it had been provided, "that said Government shall be maintained until such time as the people residing in the Territory shall apply for and obtain admission as a state on an equal footing with the original states."

"And this," said Senator Minturn, referring to the question of the pledge, "will, we believe, be the direct point of attack at the next session. Beverly is said to ridicule the pledge; to have declared that it is not legal and, therefore, not binding, as a contract. Strictly speaking, this is true; the pledge is not a contract enforcible in the courts. Specific performance of it cannot be compelled in equity. It is like a treaty in one sense. It is binding as the word of a man of honor, binding in *foro conscientiae,* binding in honor; and if ever there was a pledge which ought to be kept, this

pledge made by the Congress of the United States away back in 1863 to all the men and women and children who have gone their way from the South and from the New England States and the Middle Western States to the plains of Arizona, is such.' ''

He spoke with that impassioned utterance which was the obvious outgrowth of his knowledge of and love for the old American traditions.

''Richard Wood has written Treverin that the opposition to the bill in Arizona may be fairly described as unanimous; that ninety-five per cent. of the people are opposed to the idea of a jointure. Oklahoma and Indian Territory have in a measure combined forces and are united on the question of joint statehood for themselves; the recommendation, therefore, in respect to that part of the bill meets a popular demand; but Oklahoma cannot be gotten into the Union as long as the bill is complicated by any part of the Arizona-New Mexico proposition. It is for this reason that the House is prevented from having an opportunity to vote on the question directly pertaining to the admission of Oklahoma.

''Absolute justice, however, demands that the clause referring to the two Southwestern Territories be stricken out of the measure. To do otherwise would be to violate the sensibilities of an entire people; no territory has ever been forced into statehood against its will. Such an arbitrary act of Cæsarism is unprecedented in American history. It is a political crime of such magnitude that its evil consequences must forever dog the steps of its perpetrator shadowing him to the

downfall of a reputation which has gained and held its own in the sympathies of the mass of the people because of a general aim at the ideal in spite of a loose method of attainment.

"The real animus of the measure is opposition to the growing power of the West." His voice was low and intense but vibrant with suppressed emotion. The girl listened in breathless silence, thrilled by a power that was outside of herself. His head was erect, his eyes flashed and he spoke with the heroic abandon of the old patriots; of men who dared to rebel against a tyrannical edict; of men who cared only for the verdict of the future, for the proud traditions of the race.

"It is the East against the West; just as in sixty-three at the heart of the issue lay that material and political rivalry which existed between the Northern States and the South. This is the party which as an organization condemned the fugitive slave law as sectional; and yet in order that its complex political machinery may be run more smoothly, in order that the power of the East in Federal legislation may be more easily maintained; because of the fear that political advantage may be lost; it is considered a partisan duty to aid in joining these Territories—without consideration of the interests of the people, even when by doing so a fundamental principle of liberty is violated; a principle of liberty, that was enunciated in the famous Declaration through the clause, 'that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.'

"Can they not see that the West is going to be in a rage over it one of these days, if the scheme shall be fully consummated? But it will not be consummated; the measure is too unstatesmanlike; too grossly improper; it violates too flagrantly the spirit of the constitution. The principle itself is wrong—subversive of the rights of the people. They will not, I think, welcome the destruction of the very fabric of our free institutions." He smiled at last and then added with light irony: "for whether or no the genius of our institutions has ceased to exist, our political *professions* still cluster about the *sentiment*, and this *is* 'a government of the people, by the people and for the people.'"

CHAPTER IX.

"Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great? * * * *
Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world,
Like a Colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.
Men at some times are masters of their fates!
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
* * * * Age, thou art ashamed!
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?"

"And the Lord Henry was a great debater,
So that few members kept the House up later."

It was during March of the following year that a savage personal attack was made upon Senator Minturn on the floor of the Upper House.

As one of the few public men who enjoyed life quietly without reaching out for publicity, he had, up to that time, made no bitter enemies. If, more than once, he had won splendid tributes from his colleagues as a man of dignity, character and political acumen. he had as well merited the unusual recognition that had come to him from his opponents. Wounds, of course, he had received, but they had, heretofore, left

only such scars as fall to the lot of every public man who must, at some stage of his career have offended others, unless indeed he have the misfortune to be one of those agreeably voiceless persons who is not of sufficient weight to make his presence felt.

Upon the statehood issue, however, Senator Minturn had been drawn, much against his will and contrary to his inclinations into the arena at a time when one of the bitterest and most dramatic battles in the annals of legislation was being fought.

Saturated with constitutional doctrines that were coming to be regarded as old-fashioned and almost outworn, he was one of the first to see the far-reaching consequences, the drastic and revolutionary character, of a bill which amounted to the coercion of a whole people in the exercise of a function so important as the creation of a state. To thus establish as a precedent through legislation this "ruthless denial of the principle of self-government," appeared to him as so extraordinary and preposterous a policy that the Senate amendments, striking from the statehood bill Arizona and New Mexico and admitting only Oklahoma and Indian Territory as one state, had seemed the only logical conclusion of the issue.

After a fierce but inequal fight in the House, the so-called "insurgents" against the Republican organization in that body, had once more gone down to defeat, but not before their courageous assault upon that unscrupulous political bossism (which had crept into the legislative hall, and unsheathed its dagger on the very footsteps of that throne where, Democracy, like Ham-

let, had been thrust to be crowned in death) had kindled a sentiment in the Senate which was evidently to overwhelm the jointure scheme.

When, early in March, the bill had reached the deliberative councils of the upper house, the machine edifice that had for so long stood in the way of honest conviction was already beginning to totter; but even among the elder statesmen there was some strong opposition to be encountered, because a measure which could assure a continuance of that Republican majority by which prestige of the party had been for so long a time maintained was not to be lightly amended.

The two Republican Senators who would in all probability be sent up from the Greater Arizona, offset by two Democrats from the new Oklahoma, would maintain the present political status quo; whereas the future possibility of four Democratic Senators and possibly six when the Southwestern Territories should have, later, come separately into the sisterhood of states, had, necessarily, to be taken into consideration.

Among those at first in favor of the bill in its original form were some conservatives of the old school who through laudable partisanship had been swept into a mistaken position by remarkable and misleading statements made by persons who had been delegated to manufacture joint-statehood sentiment in the Territories. These men, undisturbed by the violent division of opinion, were only too willing to be convinced that the Nation was interested in amalgamation, because, until the fate of the few remaining Territories was decided, the question would be always "bobbing up" in Congress

to the hindrance and delay of more important measures. Moreover, because the railway and mining lobby was said to be using some money to prevent the passage of the bill, these men refused to be alarmed by that bogey of Republicanism, the interference of the so-called popular will. What the corporations were contending for must of necessity be iniquitous in origin and since, in the inner circle, where such decisions were formed, it had been determined that the passage of the measure was for the best interests of the party as well as for the good of the Nation, loyal Republicans must, of necessity, protest against the action to amend it.

With a large body of independent Republicans, however, it had come a time when political exigency and party consideration had ceased to be paramount to such intangible realities as good faith, loyalty to duty and honor in the fulfilment of a sacred obligation. They insisted that the region of exact justice lay beyond the realm of partisan politics and, therefore, in the calm atmosphere of reason, they weighed the issue. To push the measure, they declared, could only be an arrogant usurpation of authority and they even went so far as to aver that the idea had originated with other undisciplined impulses in a single lawless mind.

It was largely due to the influence of such men as these, who threw their weight with the opposition in spite of the fact that the measure was supported by the organization of their own party, that those who advocated the passage of the Hamilton bill were outvoted by the Senate when it cut out Arizona and New Mex-

ico; confining the operation of the bill to Oklahoma and Indian Territory.

The debate had been one of the most acrid in the recent history of legislation and Carroll Minturn, interested at last, had been a witness of the most exciting scenes in both the Senate and the House.

The winter had been an unusually gay and brilliant one in Washington and the girl, contrary to her usual custom, had thrown herself into the whirl of the season's social and political activities.

"I *am* so tired of reasoning things out, was the way she explained the change, in what she had, herself, once characterized as the "method" of her life. Her father, in whom her unwonted restlessness aroused a vague anxiety, had called forth the remark by asking, gently, if she were quite well, and suggesting somewhat tentatively that she hardly seemed her usual self.

"I intend, dearest," she had responded quickly, "to let myself drift with the current for a time, and to see if that won't make life a trifle less complex." And so she had been drifting gradually into an interest in this much mooted statehood issue, that rather surprised herself. It was an interest through which, without realizing it, she was brought into more frequent touch with Treverin, whom she met now and then in the gallery of the Senate and ran across, sometimes, down at the House. He, for his part, was finding a rather perilous enjoyment in watching the progress of the issue as it developed through her eyes.

They were together on several of those memorable occasions, when Beverly, who had all along been in-

tensely loyal to the organization had, as one of its most gifted speakers, raised his "golden voice" in defense of the Hamilton bill. Once, Treverin had praised with generous enthusiasm his rival's delivery and, at another time, he had said that Beverly could always be depended upon for a manful and outspoken defense of his party. To which the girl had responded rather absently, he had thought, not knowing how desperately she was trying all the while to stifle the questions which, like Banquo's ghost, rose always to sit at the banquets of life.

"She was glad," she told herself, "glad always" to hear such encomiums of her lover. Why, then, should she be constantly wondering if Clarence always fought above the surface, or if he were capable of doing otherwise, should his political life require it.

She had been present at one session, indeed, when during an exciting debate, he had been accused by a prominent Senator, whose recent defection from the ranks had called forth Beverly's bitter denunciation, of transcending the laws of political ethics.

To Beverly's scornful retort that, at any rate, he had never lowered his colors, the Senator had replied with certain indefinite insinuations about juggling with figures, distorting statistics, and misrepresenting facts, in a feverish activity to manufacture joint-statehood sentiment in the Territories for the greater deception and further confusion of the unconvinced; whereupon Beverly, with vigorous thumps of his desk, had insisted upon being heard, while he read sundry well-authenticated telegrams and signed statements, which he se-

lected from a huge mass of documentary evidence, in verification of his statements as to the Territorial sentiment on jointure.

His boyish manifestation of excitement had amused her immensely, at the time, but it was not long before she was to have occasion to reflect upon the causes that had produced the outbreak.

It was shortly after this that her father's political honesty was assailed on the floor. There was no direct attack. Senator Minturn's name was not even mentioned in connection with certain general refereces to the "past indescretions" and "present methods" of well-known legislators whose "unimpeached integrity has, for so long, been the vaunted glory of the allies in this movement."

Reading through the speech, one uninformed about Senator Minturn's connection with the anti-joint statehood issue would have seen nothing more than a vague criticism of persons unknown. Indeed, so thoroughly veiled were the allusions, so subtly concealed was each damning inuendo, that Miss Minturn, who happened to be alone with Treverin in the member's gallery at the time, was not, at first, aware that anything unusual was on foot. Not until she saw her father flush and then go suddenly pale, not until she noticed that Treverin's attitude had stiffened, that he was leaning forward slightly and listening intently, did she comprehend that something out of the ordinary was happening.

Even then she thought it must be only one of those bitter little forensic quarrels in which nearly every

Senator in the Chamber has at some time been engaged. She knew, moreover, that her father had frequently called down upon himself the unsparing lash of satire and the sharpened weapons of wit because of his many appeals to the traditions of the past as opposed to the methods of the present, evinced through that vast system of "truck and barter" in patronage which has grown up in recent years and through which in the "spirit of the Cairo Bazaar" political interests are sometimes served at the cost of the public by partisan leaders who seize and keep control of party machinery. So she imagined at first that the speaker on the floor was only striving desperately to put her father in an unpleasant position; indulging in personal criticism in order to square, perhaps, a grudge of long standing.

Gradually, however, she began to realize that there was something here of a more serious nature; a passing reference had been made to previous fraudulent misrepresentation of a certain property in Arizona which had borne the name of that bird whose sentimental and symbolical significance for all Americans was well known. It was suggested that money had been "extorted" from investors under false pretenses, and finally the speaker had ended his excoriation with the question:

"In conjunction with such a record is it possible to doubt the present demoralizing influences of those great railroad and mining corporations which have combined their interests with those of the Commonwealth in order that they may be permitted to enjoy

continued immunity from adequate taxation under Territorial law?''

It was all strictly parliamentary and yet not one of his hearers had the slightest doubt about the point. Here was more than an imputation of ulterior motives; more than an insinuation that her father was bound hand and foot to that coterie of moneyed interests which was said to dictate legislation; it amounted to a direct charge that Senator Minturn had, with others, been engaged in questionable transactions during the past; that, therefore, of necessity, he must be a tool of those great mining tax-dodgers who were said to be backing the supposititious lobby at Washington.

It was one of the most scurrilous public attacks which could have been made upon a man's character, and its meaning was as obvious as its motive, which was evidently the making of that political capital that is so cheaply bought by appealing to the public sentiment for righteousness. Bitterly, passionately, Carroll Minturn longed for vengeance upon a vociferous integrity whose self-appreciation could so deceive and delude the multitude. She wondered how long this man had been laying the tracks into which the last spike had, today, been driven. Through love of power, personal, or party, he had in a blind determination to carry his point, been willing to reach out both hands for the crushing of such forces, individual and corporate, as opposed themselves to his unbridled will, caring little if a good name were lost in the wreckage. ''Would this have been considered worthy treat-

ment of a business opponent, or was it only the commendable animus of politics?''

She looked across the Chamber to where her father sat with folded arms and flashing eye, facing the man who had just attacked that honor which she knew he considered his dearest possession in life.

Criticism rarely annoyed him; it seemed rather to increase the coolness with which he looked down from his calm height upon the person who uttered it. Personal attack, he had always refused to answer. But surely now, he could not keep silence! It was impossible to permit vituperation which so villified his reputation to go undenied!

His proud head was erect, his bearing superb, but not a word escaped the tightly closed lips with which he shut back the sentences that might have so easily escaped; and then, in the same moment that brought her a realization of the futility of a reply, she heard Treverin's low voice at her ear.

'' 'What no gentleman would say, no gentleman need answer,' '' he quoted softly.

There was a blinding blur of confused figures where the Senate Chamber should have been and then, all at once, she flashed back at him through sudden unshed tears.

''But his vindication!'' she breathed passionately. ''More than anything in life, I want his vindication.''

''I hope to be able to find it,'' he replied simply, and there was a quiet confidence in his voice that was reassuring.

A second more, and Beverly, with a sincere desire to compose the difficulty, was on his feet, trying in an indignant voice to stay the effect of the speech and at the same time to pay off an old score against the man who had uttered it.

"I challenge this loose statement of the Senator and call for his proofs," he began confidently, and the girl felt that she had never been so near to loving him.

"In the shadow of the main issues," he went on quickly, "the accusations made by the Senator would be trivial if they were true. 'As long as Arizona remains a Territory, and there is no prospect of immediate admission to statehood, if the proposed law for jointure shall fail of enactment at this time, as long as Arizona remains a Territory the Congress of the United States has power at all times and at any time to regulate taxation in the Territory, and if the system is wrong, Congress can change it. It might also be remembered that if there were corruption, it would hardly be more troublesome to control a state legislature than one within a Territory or more expensive to 'influence' a 'venal voter.' 'Nor can it be believed that it would be more difficult to control the joint legislature, if it materialize, unless it be held that the Arizonians are politically more corrupt than the New Mexicans, and it is to be doubted if even a New Mexican would make such a claim.' What would there be about a state government that would make its assessors more honest? There is better opportunity, no doubt, 'for an even assessment under a governor appointed by the President than under one seated, perhaps, by the power of

corporations. Already the Governor of Arizona has succeeded in bringing the most notable offenders to justice and the Territorial Supreme Court has sustained his course.' ''

It was a clever line of defense and with the utterance of each salient sentence, the girl's heart warmed to Clarence Beverly as it had not done for months. When, at length, he finished with a repetition of the challenge and glanced up at the gallery as he sat down, there was a look for him in the girl's eyes that made Treverin, who imagined something of its significance, wince.

But the question was evidently not settled in the mind of the Senator from ——, who turned squarely about when it came his turn to speak and expressed surprise and chagrin that a Senator who was said to have been himself caught heavily in the wildcat mining scheme, just referred to, should be so ready to champion the cause of one of the perpetrators of the fraud.

''It is said,'' he went on blandly, ''that the Senator himself pulled out after an early awakening and has never again been drawn so deeply into the whirl; but it is nevertheless difficult to understand *how*''—with ironic emphasis on the word—''a man who is believed to have bundle after bundle of stocks representing at their face value thousands of dollars but really worth little more than the paper on which they are printed, can be so free from prejudice.''

To which Beverly had curtly responded with the retort that since the Senator from —— had so evident-

ly forgotten his manners, he should be obliged to remind the Senator that his (Beverly's) private misfortunes were really none of his business.

Whereupon the Senator from —— had responded with a well-calculated shrewdness, under which Beverly appeared to flinch:

"The Senator will do well to remember that in some of his remarks he saw fit to question my veracity. I am not in the habit of allowing such a charge to go unquestioned but," with a sardonic smile, "under the circumstances, it is fitting to lay aside a personal grievance until the main point at issue between the Senator and myself shall have been settled.

"The Senator has challenged me to corroborate these statements. It is my firm belief that the Senator's political business with a certain man named Fowler will enable him to verify without my aid the charges which he has denied and, therefore," he paused for a moment in order that his last words might have time to take effect and then facing Beverly squarely, he added, with sinister meaning, "I throw upon the Senator himself the burden of proof for the defendant."

After which Beverly was silent.

CHAPTER X.

"The mind has a thousand eyes: the heart, but one."
"It is necessary to have adored a woman of genius," said Tallyrand, in order to comprehend the luxury of loving a fool."

THAT night Treverin sent in cipher the following telegram to Richard Wood:

"Senator Minturn accused on the floor of complicity with Fowler in the Bald Eagle swindle. Send proofs of his innocence if you can obtain them."

Wood's (cipher) reply, received within twenty-four hours seemed satisfactory, and read:

"Have gotten into communication with the man, Dumford. He leaves for Washington tonight. His testimony with corroboration of letters just mailed contain all the proof you need."

The substance of the good news he condensed in a little note to Carroll Minturn, who was said to be seriously ill, and the flowers which he had selected to be sent up at the same time were eloquent of hope.

After that he settled down to prosaic days of quiet waiting until Dumford and the letters should have reached Washington, while Carroll, glad of an excuse for refusing herself to all visitors, especially Beverly, also waited.

In the meantime, on the twenty-second day of March, a special rule disagreeing with the Senate amendments

to the Hamilton bill was got through the House and a conference committee authorized. When formal word of the phantom triumph reached the Senate there was a lively wrangle over the appointment of conferees, and then a series of meetings which resulted in the public statement on the twenty-eighth that the House conferees were willing to accept an amendment providing for a separate vote in Arizona and New Mexico, at the next general election, on the question whether the two Territories should come into the Union as one State. The majority in the Senate, however, still held out for the bill as originally amended, admitting Oklahoma uncomplicated by the Arizona-New Mexico proposition, refusing to adopt the conference report, which was, at best, a compromise representing concessions by the various contending forces.

Beverly and his faction, while favorable to the referendum plan, insisted, for some inexplicable reason, that a majority of all votes cast should decide the question, while their opponents declared such a proposition obviously unfair, on the ground that the anticipated New Mexican majority in favor of joint-statehood would in all probability overwhelm almost any adverse majority in her sister Territory, whose people were naturally more bitterly opposed to the union than the citizens of New Mexico because the latter would derive from their numerical advantage the compensation of dominating the situation, at least.

And so the war went merrily on, while men who belonged to that group of which Treverin was said to be the most illustrious light sat back and looked on at

the fray, never for a moment admitting the thought of ultimate defeat.

At length Richard Wood's letter arrived, containing among other salient sentences the following:

"Fowler, who is in Washington, is said to have been Beverly's chief lieutenant in New Mexico, where he still aspires to be leader of the joint-statehood forces, although discredited by the party and people alike.

"Dumford seems confident of being able to force him to talk, and I think when you have heard his story you'll be inclined to agree that the cards are all in our hands.

"Beverly, by the way, seems still to be unduly active in championship of the jointure idea, and I rather fear, if the referundum plan is adopted, that Fowler's fulminating political enthusiasm will be allowed to expend itself in influencing voters in both Territories. It's rather surprising that Beverly should have gotten himself mixed up with a crowd like that. I've always been inclined to believe, with the rest of the world, that he was above the sins of the party."

The day after the letters came, Dummy full of gossip about statehood that Treverin found extremely diverting, and primed with facts relative to "Cap'n Minturn's" integrity that were more than satisfying.

"Yes," he declared sententiously, "Fowler he's ben back of most of this here prophesyin' about annexation's bein' a sure thing. Seems he's bought several hundred people to swear that its only the 'politicians' in Arizona as is opposin' the jointure scheme.

"Fact is, sir, he's got his eye on bein' Senator some

day, an' gettin' sent up by them durned Mexican greasers to the Senate, fer he likes bein' a *respectable* robber, it seems. He ain't at all modest, ain't Fowler—my eye, no. Why, last election he even bolted the Republican convention when it didn't nominate him fer delegate, and ran independent, though he couldn't get mor'n a few thousan' votes, and claimed afterward as how he was 'jobbed' at the polls.

"I guess," and Dummy winked knowingly, "it was one o' the honestest jobs as was ever done at the polls, Mr. Treverin."

It was about this time that Treverin wrote to Beverly stating frankly that he wished to make an appointment for a conference relative to the establishment of Senator Minturn's innocence of the base charges recently made upon the floor.

Beverly replied at once that he would be glad to accommodate Mr. Treverin at any time, and especially in regard to this matter in which he himself was deeply interested.

When, a few evenings later, he was shown into Treverin's sitting-room, he seemed surprised, annoyed and somewhat startled to find Fowler already there, and both men were visibly disconcerted when, a second after Beverly's entrance, Dummy came into the room, and Treverin, with a quiet "good-evening," invited the one-time bartender of the Diana saloon at Sunshine to be seated.

"We are all, I take it," began Treverin, looking around upon the curiously assorted company, "we are all more or less interested in the establishment of the

innocence of a man to whom honor," he paused a moment and then went on with a fine tact which two of his hearers, at least appreciated, "to whom honor means much more than it can, perhaps, to many men of this age."

Beverly nodded, and the two others murmured assent.

"With the past history of the Gald Eagle Mining Company," continued Treverin easily, "it is not our province to deal." Fowler breathed more freely. "Except in so far as a review of that history may enable us to determine how far it will be possible to disassociate the name of Senator Minturn from any responsibility in that last." He waited for a brief instant and then ended happily, "from any responsibility in that last unfortunate effort to promote public interest in the property. For we are all rather fully aware, I believe, that nothing less than absolute disproof of these charges will secure in the public mind this gentleman's vindication."

There was an impersonal sincerity in the frank eyes and a judicial calmness in the even voice that robbed the words of their sting.

"I myself am fortunately in a position to furnish some personal testimony in behalf of Senator Minturn."

At these words, that organ which was Dummy's excuse for a heart glowed with the primitive instinct for hero-worship; and through that capacity for strange and sudden loyalties which lay at the root of

his warped nature he was stirred with a sudden determination that the defense should not be lost.

"On the —— day of June, 1893," continued Treverin gravely, "from the window of a sleeping-car, there was accidentally overheard by me a conversation which took place on the platform at —— Junction, between Doctor Fowler, who was already known to me by sight, and this man," he nodded slightly in the direction of the whilom Apache Sam, "whom the Doctor addressed as 'Dummy.'"

Fowler flushed uneasily; Dummy smiled shrewdly; Beverly seemed mystified, and Treverin, who had, apparently, noticed nothing, went on:

"An affidavit of the substance of that conversation, sworn to by me, would, I think, furnish conclusive proof that Senator—or, rather, Captain Minturn, as he was generally known at that time—was not in Sunshine, when a large party of Eastern investors, that had been taken out by Doctor Fowler, was shown over the property.

"You remember, Senator Beverly, do you not?" and Treverin addressed himself directly to that gentleman, "our meeting about that time, on a Southern Pacific train while en route for Tucson?"

"Perfectly, Mr. Treverin," responded Beverly.

"You were then, I think you told me, becoming interested yourself in this property," Treverin's eyebrows questioned.

"Unfortunately, yes," rejoined Beverly, shortly.

"He's hatin' like the devil fer any one to be thinkin'

he was ever fool enough to get pinched," was the comment of Dummy.

"I have here a prospectus of the Bald Eagle Company," proceeded Treverin, producing the document, "from which it would appear that Captain Minturn was never directly quoted."

He turned over the pages absently for a moment as though considering what point it would be best to take up next, and then, raising his eyes and looking squarely across at Beverly, he asked abruptly:

"Would you be willing to swear, Senator Beverly, that, although you were one of the unfortunate investors who lost money through this property, Senator Minturn was in no way instrumental in inducing you and others whom you could name, to purchase stock?"

Beverly looked uncomfortable and glanced over at Fowler, whose expression was non-committal.

"There might be some difficulty about swearing to such a statement, I fear." Beverly was evidently temporizing, and Treverin wondered if it could be nothing more than the Senator's aversion to acknowledging that he had been "fleeced," which made him so reluctant.

"You see," continued Beverly as though he were feeling vainly for some plausible excuse, "as a technical matter of fact, Mr. Treverin, the name of Senator Minturn *was* mentioned in the transaction in so far as I was given to understand that his opinion of the property carried weight."

"Ah!" exclaimed Treverin in surprise and some doubt. "Then your denial of the charges made in the

Senate, the other day, was simply an impulsive and generous desire to defend a friend whom you, yourself, had reason to fear guitlty?" he asked keenly.

"Not exactly," returned Beverly, feeling somehow as though he were being cornered in spite of himself. "However, Mr. Treverin," he added hastily, "I might swear that Senator Minturn is not guilty, without appending my reasons."

"And do you think such a statement would carry weight?" asked Treverin, with some amusement. "A sworn statement of a conclusion without giving the facts upon which one's knowledge is based means little to the average mind, no matter who makes it."

"And yet, I hardly see my way clear toward doing more," replied Beverly. He was irritated and angry at having been forced to assume what he considered a false position.

"You might think it over," suggested Treverin sententiously.

"And now, Doctor," he continued, turning suddenly upon the astute Fowler, "how about you? Will you swear that Senator Minturn had no knowledge or part in any misrepresentations of this property?"

Fowler considered a moment, evidently weighing the question as to whether he might gain less by acquiescence or hope for more through denial, and then, at length, with a brilliant perspicacity that surprised even himself, he replied:

"I think, Mr. Treverin, that I shall adopt the plan which Senator Beverly decides to follow."

"A course that rather increases the Senator's responsibility," commented Treverin smiling.

"And Dumford," he asked pleasantly, turning at last to that individual in whose small bright eyes a close observer might have detected a strange glitter of triumph, "what light, I wonder, can you throw upon the situation?"

"I've already promised to give testimony, Mr. Treverin, 'bout hearin' several talks between the Cap'n an' this here—Fowler." There was a supreme contempt in his utterance of the name—a contempt which somehow carried the significance of an apology—a repudiation, as it were, of all previous fawning and flattery that may have crept into his former usage of that titular prefix, "Doctor."

"Them talks showed plain enough how innocent the Cap'n was of all the swindlin' that was goin' on. I've likewise give you a tip as to my own dealin's with Fowler, an' of how them dealin's forced him, off an' on, to show up some of the strongest cards in his hand, also I could swear that Cap'n Minturn wa'nt in Sunshine when Fowler's big stage-play was goin' on.

"But I ain't, yet, let out—even to you, Mr. Treverin—that I know a little somethin' that might be interestin' with regard to this here gent." Dummy paused impressively, while all eyes followed the direction of his nod, which meant, distinctly, Beverly.

The latter's head went up arrogantly, but an ill concealed anxiety crept into his eyes as the man went on with his story.

"The report, somehow, got roun' up in Sunshine,"

and Dummy's shrewd leer gave a suggestive hint as to the origin of that report to which he referred, "the report got 'roun' somehow, even while the stage-play was goin' on, that everything wasn't jest right." Fowler glowered in savage reminiscence.

"An' then, one night, this here gent an' that foxy little spitfire, what I seen to-day, settin' up so pert like, bossin' the House of Representatives, them two together hunts out Fowler and demands a explanation, threatenin' to look up this here honest Cap'n what they was always hearin' about an' expose the whole durn business.

"Fowler was so skeered that he lost his head fer the first time in his life, an' instead of callin' the bluff, as usual, he jist throws up all the cards an' begins confessin' how the Captain ain't in this business a-tall an' can't tell them nothin', but as how he, Fowler, was willin' to pay back what them two had put into the proputy if they'll jest promise to keep things mum."

"Which explains," finished Dummy, and with a triumphant flourish of the solitary but ubiquitous finger he emphasized his own acuteness, "which explains why this here honorable gent ain't goin' to swear to losin' money what he's already got back."

There was silence in the room for a moment, the silence of consternation, as when a bomb has been suddenly exploded. Fowler was nonchalant as usual; one more discovery made very little difference to him. Treverin looked amazed. But it was upon Beverly, at length, that all eyes were turned; upon Beverly, the renowned champion of the square deal, who, in the

guise of a comprehensive benevolence, had already begun that courageous assault upon such lions as his quixotic zeal inspired him to uncage; upon Beverly, who had been sweeping along with the tide of public sentiment, buoyed up by the clamor of the multitude only to be exposed at last as a Samson shorn of his strength.

For a man of his caliber, the doom of grinding in a prison house of that moral Philistinism which his soul abhorred, even more perhaps than his spirit was capable of despising the weakness which had been its own undoing, seemed so terrible that even Treverin was, for a moment, sorry.

Beverly, himself, however, rallying quickly that uncrushed egotism which could almost rise to the heights of infallibility, looked about him defiantly as he said:

"After thinking the matter over, Mr. Treverin, I have concluded to swear to the statement which you have suggested, and, by following out these lines of defense, I believe it will be possible for me to vindicate Senator Minturn, publicly, in the Senate. As to this base calumny," continued Beverly, with an arrogant assumption of dignity, as he glared over Dummy's head, "it would be quite beneath me to reply to such a falsehood."

"An' ef this here crawlin' helps the gent to a doin' of the right thing, I guess I kin stand it," was the laconic answer with which Dummy acepted his nomination to the "Ananias Club."

"Allow me to congratulate you upon the *wisdom* of

your decision, Senator Beverly," was Treverin's enigmatical reply.

It was during the afternoon of the following day that Beverly uttered his famous defense, and for more than an hour thereafter the Democratic cloakroom was crowded with Senators, and a general and very cordial shaking of hands took place while many warm tributes were paid to the character of Senator Minturn.

It was one of those informal political receptions whose chief charm is the spontaneity which inspires movement, and it was significant of the personality of the man that he was forced to strike hands with almost every member of the entire body, irrespective of political faith.

After it was all over, the Senator, hurrying out through the corridor, ran across an odd-looking figure whose extended hand seemed, somehow, strangely familiar.

"I guess, Cap'n," exclaimed an almost forgotten voice, "that a good American kin shake with one of the lawmakers of his country, can't he?"

"By all means, Dummy," returned the Senator cordially, as he caught with quick recollection the memory of Sunshine days. "I was not aware that you were in Washington."

"Ain't been here only since the twenty-ninth," returned the other laconically. "An' I'm mighty durn proud, Cap'n Minturn, to be here now a-helpin' in the inspirin' of such speeches ez I hear made about you from the gallery this arternoon. My eye! But they

was a crowd, wan't they, an 'how they did ancore the mentionin' of your name. An' all the while I wuz sayin' ter myself, 'Dummy, ole boy, ain't ye proud of helpin' that honorable gent, so graceful like, to the makin' of this here speech?' "

"What, exactly, do you mean?" demanded Senator Minturn, looking puzzled, and Dummy, without further urging, gave a minute description of the scene which had been enacted but the evening before at Treverin's hotel.

"Dear Clarence," wrote Carroll Minturn, the following morning: "Have just finished reading reports of yesterday's 'doings' in the Senate. What a splendid defense (of my father) your's was! If you have no other engagement you might drop in this afternoon for a cup of tea and I may, perhaps, be able to tell you how much I liked it.

"*Au revoir,* then *mon* Chevalier Senatorial—until five.

"CARROLL."

"My father telephoned that he had an important engagement down town for last night so I have not seen him since yesterday morning, and consequently have had little more than newspaper accounts."

She did not mention that a short message from Treverin had been sent up five minutes after the session was over, congratulating her upon the triumphant conclusion of the issue, and relating briefly, but with those happy personal touches which appeal to a wom-

an's thought, the dramatic substance of the most striking incidents.

Her note to Beverly had been gone not more than half an hour, when Senator Minturn came in hastily. He seemed agitated, and his daughter, who had expected to see him radiant over his vindication, asked anxiously if there were anything seriously wrong.

He did not respond until he had seated himself beside her, and then, taking both of her hands in his own, he began gently but with unmistakable firmness:

"Daughter, I have made an accidental discovery which should, I think, alter your entire future. Do you want me to tell you about it?"

She was very pale, but there was no tremor in the voice that answered steadily:

"Please, dearest." And then, with a sudden childlike impulse to trust herself at last to a judgment surer than her own, she added quickly: "Isn't it best always to know?"

"I am quite sure that it is best for *you* to know, daughter," he rejoined gravely. And then he told her all that Dumford had related to him.

"Are you quite sure," she asked in a still voice, when he had finished, "that the man's statements can be relied upon?"

"I went at once to Treverin, and"—— there was no mistaking the conviction in Senator Minturn's voice, "what the man says is *true.*"

There was a long silence between them, and then:

"I shall see Clarence—Senator Beverly—this afternoon," she said, slowly.

"Couldn't I spare you that, daughter?" he asked tentatively, and then added with tender solicitude, for he knew well enough what her answer would be, "you are so very far from well, my child."

"Does my father, who equipped me for the crisis," and there was a smile of tender irony in the weary eyes, "advise me not to meet it alone?"

"It will be very hard for you, I fear," he said gravely.

"Not so hard as it might have been,' ' she responded slowly, "had the man been other than he is; had the motives that lay behind these acts been less grotesquely, less transparently obvious."

"Thank heaven that you are not hurt," he exclaimed with fervor, as he softly patted her hand.

"I think, dearest, that it must be because I have, without realizing it, felt this coming always." She spoke thoughtfully, and with a quiet calmness that amazed even herself.

She had that rarest of mental gifts, the judicial faculty (which is seldom found in woman), and before the high tribunal of her ideals she must have acknowledged failure, had it broken her heart to see it.

Fortunately for her, however, the poignant struggle between loyalty to the individual and fealty to the truth could be won in that first moment of revelation which had given her the key by which to translate the supreme and controlling motive of Clarence Beverly's mind. In that moment, when every intuition which she had previously disregarded was thoroughly awake and instinct with life, she realized that while traits

are not always sure indices of character, it is seldom that they fail to indicate its trend.

"This explains," she continued slowly, as her father, with the tenderness of a woman's touch, was lightly stroking her hair, "I think, why I never came to care for him as I knew one ought to care. Do you believe, dearest, that a woman could ever love a man whom she couldn't quite respect?"

She was talking freely, at last, as she had not done for months with her father, who had made himself the dearest friend of her motherless childhood, the closest confidant of her wilful girlhood, and the silent guardian of her impulsive womanhood.

With the surer poise and saner balance of a broadening maturity she would come to realize, more fully, the supreme folly of her having essayed to transcend those vital laws of nature which had been established "in the beginning," and even now, in the shelter of her father's arm, from the secure haven of a tried and true affection, she could, at length, acknowledge the supreme importance of an emotion which she knew she had never known.

Her father did not answer her last question directly, but somewhere, out of his memory, like the dim wraith of a promise there floated an old refrain:

"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; . . . . many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would utterly be contemned."

"And I have never known it," she said slowly.

"Not for Clarence Beverly, thank God!" he murmured under his breath.

Promptly at five o'clock Senator Beverly was shown into her study, where he found the girl awaiting him quietly. She was standing at a window in the far end of the room, and he thought that she could not have heard him announced since she came not a step to meet him.

She was aware of his presence, however, as soon as he entered the door, and the eager buoyancy of his manner, the possessive optimism in his voice as he came toward her with both palms extended to take her two hands in his own, told her that he was prepared to expect an unusual warmth of greeting.

"Your note was *good*, dear," he began, in a voice that vibrated with feeling, "and I haven't seen you for centuries."

She withdrew her hands at once, however, and answered in a tone that seemed to him strangely cold.

"My note, I fear, was a mistake."

"A mistake!" he exclaimed quickly. "What, my dear girl, can you mean?"

Her only reply was another question.

"I shall have to ask you to tell me why you failed to make the defense, at first?"

"You are enigmatical," he replied, slightly changing color. "If, however, you mean me to infer that, for some inexplicable reason you are dissatisfied with my

defense of your father, I can only say that I consider your attitude surprising."

"The defense could not have been stronger," she returned calmly, "but why need it have been delayed?"

"And why," he demanded with some heat, "should I have to answer this question?"

"Because," she replied steadily, "I have understood that some one else was back of this move; that the move itself might never have been made but for unusual pressure. Because, in absolute justice, I consider it strictly fair to accept this condemnation only from yourself."

"If you really cared for me," he exclaimed bitterly, "you could not question my motives. Love is uncritical; it does not doubt."

"Are you not begging the question?" she demanded coldly. "Is not the point at issue between us rather one of respect?"

He realized the truth that lay back of her words, and he knew, moreover, that, in the last analysis, he could make no appeal to her emotions; that her judgment of him would be essentially a verdict of the mind.

"I suppose," he began, changing his tactics, "I suppose this has come to your father directly through Treverin, and——"

"Stop," she commanded sternly, and her head went up proudly: "Mr. Treverin is hardly the man to embark on a panegyric of his own deeds."

Neither of them was surprised at the warmth of her defense, for she had ever been loyal to a friend, but Beverly felt vaguely that here was an unconscious comparison with himself.

"This knowledge came to my father," she went on quickly, "quite by accident through a man called Dumford, whom he once employed in the West."

"I suppose, then," and his voice was anxious, for he realized, at last, the importance of the issue, "I suppose that you have heard the whole story of the other night."

"Yes," she answered simply, "I have heard. But I am waiting for what you have to say because—Oh, don't you see, can't you understand, that unless I could believe you incapable of the motives which seem to have inspired these acts, it would be necessary to put an end, at once, to everything between us?"

Had she been a woman of compromises he could not have loved her as he did, and it was significant that he had never felt as strongly the appeal of that individuality which was so large a part of her personal charm as at this moment, when the gulf began to yawn widely between her point of view and his own.

It was, perhaps, the very directness of her character as opposed to his own more devious methods that attracted him, for there were strange paradoxes in the nature of this man; and expediency, rather than definite choice, had made him an opportunist.

He had never been analytical, except in a superficial sense; but suddenly, as though he were physically drowning; in swift kaleidescopic flashes he caught luminous glimpses of his life, and through them he came to realize that it was something far deeper than impulse which had drawn him to this woman, something more evanescent than her mental gifts or her physical

loveliness or her social charm. He knew, at last, that she represented to him a beautiful embodiment of his highest aspirations; that through the very quality of that spirit which was even now bringing him to judgment she had seemed to preserve for *him,* somehow, the purest hopes of his youth and the finest memories of his manhood.

With the new impulse for self-criticism strong upon him, he saw with wonderful clearness the significance of the crisis—he knew that if he lost her he would lose his better self. He did not yet know that the severest penalty of failure lies in the fact that the soul's degeneracy must eventually reflect back upon itself; that with the loss of moral fibre would come an incapacity for feeling that loss; that the mind must finally come to dread the very source of that light which entailed its condemnation; that the heart would seek the luxury of an atmosphere which could never again prove its own undoing; but for one passionate instant of agonized longing, he imagined that he would have given anything on earth for the power to fulfill the promise of those unspoiled ideals. He realized that he must say something; make a last fight for this woman, whom he could not bear to lose. But how was he to proceed? What could he do? She was not to be deluded by the glittering mockery of false sentiment, nor would her mind be satisfied with misleading eloquence. In the intense bitterness of the moment he thought of attempting deception, but however he may have sinned he had not lied to Carroll Minturn, and with her clear eyes full upon him he could not lie to her now.

They were both still standing: she had not left the window, and against a background of richly dark hangings her pale face and golden hair were merely outlined through the incoming twilight; he, with one elbow resting upon some tall bookshelves, had bowed for a moment, his head upon his hand until a fuller inspiration should come.

At last he spoke and his voice, no longer confident, appealed, as he had meant that it should, to all the tenderness of her womanhood.

"Whatever my enemies may have said, I had hoped, I had believed, that *you* would understand me, Carroll.

"Suppose," he went on, slowly, "suppose I were to tell you that in a moment of great temptation I had yielded to Fowler's terms—remember, Carroll, that it was not then in my power to, also, save others—suppose I were to tell you that it was for the sake of my political career; because I was just getting into public life, and it meant my little all, what would you say to me then?"

It was the strongest appeal that he could have made, because it aimed directly at her sympathies, and because it was the kind of temptation that touched the heart of her own ambitions.

For a second it carried her off of her feet, and she wanted to tell him that she understood, to say that she was sorry, and then, suddenly, she saw again the logical sequence of events by which she had been able to determine the power of the original motive; she realized the sophistry of his plea, and she met it with a question.

"But the defense of my father, Clarence! You have not told me *why* you delayed that defense."

"Can you not see," he demanded impatiently, irritated beyond measure that he could not set the bounds of her reason by the measure of his own—"can you not see how I have always been hampered by that foolish oath to Fowler?"

"That oath!" she exclaimed, with a withering scorn that cut him to the quick. "And for how much did such an oath count with you when you saw that you yourself must lose more by keeping it than by breaking it?

"Ah, don't you know that it is not upon separate acts that I judge you, but upon the determining motive that inspired you to those acts? Can't you see that it is yourself whom you have saved—always—*yourself*—at whatever cost?"

She saw him as he was. She realized that nothing but a complete revolution of his character could change him, and she knew that such a change was impossible, bocause his virtues had ceased to be of value to him except in so far as they enabled him to maintain the part he had set himself to play.

"But Carroll, Carroll," he cried desperately, "you ignore the fact that my attitude toward this man was no longer a personal matter—that he had become politically useful; that he was needed by the party-"

"And why need you have become so inextricably entangled in a political machine that your honor is always forfeit?" she demanded passionately. "As an uncorrupted patriot, have you not professed to scorn

men who could be bought for money, and yet how deliberately you have sold yourself for a transient political power! Party is with you but a sort of corporate I behind whose skirts you have hidden the individual ego, and tried to convince yourself that the end could justify the means."

Never had she seemed more beautiful than through the splendor of her magnificent scorn and, although he quailed beneath her denunciation, it was the supreme irony of his punishment that the heaven of her approval had never seemed so desirable.

"This, then, is final?" he demanded, with a bitter sense of defeat.

"Could you think it possible for it to be otherwise?" she asked, quietly.

And then he knew why he had failed. In that instant of clear vision which would never be his again he looked upon the heights of potential attainment and he realized something of the abysmal depths to which he had fallen.

Senator and Mrs. Carroll were entertaining at dinner that evening, but Senator Minturn, who was leaving town for a few days and had run in early, caught his daughter for a few minutes alone in the library.

"I wanted to say good-bye, daughter and you are just a trifle pale; I wondered if——" he hesitated.

"For the first time in many a moon, dearest, I am *sure* that all is well," she replied, smiling.

There was an impression of veiled power about her which he could not quite define; a subtle mystery of

latent strength that enveloped her in a soft radiance. He was accustomed to feel the fascination of her most brilliant moods, but in this settled poise she seemed exquisitely lovable and far more alluring. Then all at once, with the swift penetrating insight of affection, he realized that this poise had come to her like a splendid after-glow of nature, that she had found her highest self through the very tests which her spirit had just imposed.

"Yes, dearest," as she looked into his anxious eyes, "I was a bit shaken. It meant more and something less, perhaps, than just the dismissal of a man. You see," gravely, "there was a charger to be taken into account, and I have always ignored the relative significance of the rider.

"I think," she began presently, and her smile was thoughtful, almost naïve, "I am quite *sure* that *he* was not really hurt. He *thought* that *love* was wounded, but I know better than he how quickly the injury to his heart may be repaired through his vanity.

"As for me, dearest," she paused and there was a mist of tenderness in her eyes, "in my wilful blindness, best of fathers, I have been unworthy of you! Do you remember Guinevere's confession:

" 'It was my duty to have loved the highest:
It surely was my profit had I known:
It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Launcelot, nor another.' "

There was a poignant thrill of personal emotion in her voice, and as she finished the lines the room was very still; but a moment later, when she looked up, Treverin was standing in the door.

"Forgive me, I must be intruding," he began with quick apology, "but I was told that I was to have the honor of taking you in, and your Aunt assured me that I might find you here."

"You are perfectly right, Mr. Treverin," she returned with cordial frankness as she gave him a cold little hand. "I shall want you, besides, to condole with me, for I'm telling my father good-bye."

"This is most opportune, my dear Jack," exclaimed the older man, warmly; "I wanted to ask you if you thought I should be able to get hold of —— before he leaves New York."

"I'll see to it that you do, Senator, and, as I mean to be back myself on Tuesday, please remember that you've promised me a few days for a cruise, sir. By the way," he added, with swift impulsiveness, "couldn't you manage a little voyage into Southern waters—you and Miss Minturn, with Senator and Mrs. Carroll, and any one else whom you care to suggest? It would be awfully jolly, and please don't say no until you've thought it over. I'm going to get Miss Minturn enlisted tonight," he laughed mischievously, as he turned to the girl, "and then the rest of you can't hold out."

"I'm enlisted already," and she smiled at Treverin, while her eyes were upon her father's face.

"Shouldn't you like to run away for a while, father?" she asked coaxingly.

"I shall promise to think about it, daughter. It would certainly be a pleasure, Mr. Treverin," he returned smiling.

Senator Minturn had been gone but a moment when the girl turned to Treverin, and put out her hand again with that swift spontaneous impulsiveness which the man thought her greatest charm.

"Mr. Treverin," she began quickly, "at two very critical moments of my life you have generously come to my rescue, and this is the second time that you have rather ungenerously, I think (and her smiling eyes looked straight into his own) almost deprived me of the pleasure of expressing my appreciation.

"I never expect," she continued, with a grave and sweet sincerity, "to be able to tell you *quite* all that I feel about *your* splendid vindication of my father."

He noticed her slight emphasis on the pronoun. He knew also why she failed to refer to Beverly's part in the defense and in the hope of relieving the tension of the moment he responded, gravely:

"Believe me, Miss Minturn, when I say that the pleasure of serving you and your father is in itself a reward that any man——" he caught himself quickly and changed the conventional phrase to— "a reward worth striving for. But where else have I been so fortunate as in this one trifling instance?"

For a brief second he had retained the hand which she withdrew as she asked demurely:

"Has Monsieur forgotten a little scene on the desert? The *dramatis personae* were, let me think, a cool young man, a frightened maid, a brute of a desperado, a very wilful child and——" there was a roguish twinkle in her eyes as she added naïvely—"the cool young man vanished with remarkable suddenness, after the last act."

"Was it you?" he asked wonderingly, and then, "I have sometimes thought that I must have known you always," he said.

CHAPTER XI.

"Space is as nothing to spirit, the deed is outdone by the doing;
The heart of the wooer is warm, but warmer the heart of the wooing;
And up from the pits where these shiver, and up from the heights where those shine,
Twin voices and shadows swim starward, and the essence of life is divine."

—*Richard Realf.*

THE sun was hanging, a fiery brilliance, above the outer edge of the canyon's rim, while slumberous shadows, deepening from blue to violet, from violet into black, mounted slowly through the enfathomed depths.

Mists that had been brooding all day in far recesses of the rocks were creeping forth from a labyrinthine network of cavernous fissures, stealing through the deepening twilight, clinging along the cliffs and enshrouding the mighty gorge with impenetrable mystery.

Through this haze of golden radiance the whole intricate system of minor canyons—each yawning niche, each gigantic gap, each frowning declivity and each stupendous cleft—not fully concealed and but half revealed, was suggested in the single instant of one great impression, while here and there submerged mountains of gorgeously tinted limestone were flushed into rosy splendor, and huge solitary crags of adamantine basalt

stood out boldly in the fading light, like sombre colossal forms in the dim amphitheatre of Nature.

And over all was an immensity of silence so profound, of solitude so vast, that the faint sounds of life which reached them came like distant echoes that had originated in another world. A girl's clear laugh rang out from the hotel veranda, and in the music-room some one was singing Verdi's "Miserere," while the weird monotony of an Indian dance that was going on in the Hopi House beyond seemed but another primitive yearning for that harmony which would find its highest fulfillment in the "music of the spheres."

They had, in their secluded nook, been for a long time silent, watching the stupendous glory of those phantasmagorial changes that here mark the splendor of a dying day.

It was the man who spoke first.

"And it always ends at last," he said, musingly, "in a sort of twilight of the gods."

"Yes," and there was a dreamy note in the voice that answered in swift response to his thought. "The altars alone are left standing. Like lofty pinnacles, they mark the passing of a former worship. You showed me the hammer of Thor, today, and away over there, do you see, is the rock where Brunhilde was put to sleep. The fires are out, the flames quenched; the anger of Wotan is appeased, and, of eons ago, from that fantastic escarpment yonder, perhaps, the Walküren sounded their last 'Hoyotoho.'"

"And the forge, look!" he exclaimed suddenly, holding the spirit of her mood. "Do you see? It is no

longer cold! The anvil rings, the sparks fly and someone is welding a sword!"

They were standing near the rim, almost on the brink, and she leaned far out over the precipice, her glance following his and her breath coming quickly from between slightly parted lips. Beneath her long wrap his hand had sought and found hers, and she felt that his warm breath lightly stirred her hair.

"It is the magic sword of Siegfried," she breathed; "of Siegfried, the victorious."

The sun had dropped lower, and a long slanting ray of light striking directly upon a huge isolated boulder had transformed it suddenly into picturesque grandeur.

"How wonderful, Jack!" she exclaimed at last, as she turned upon him her luminous eyes. "I think I have never seen a more remarkable effect!"

He was thrilled with the pure joy of feeling that she was strongly moved, and already John Treverin had acquired that vital responsiveness of spirit which kindled her warm enthusiasms and vivid fancies with poetic fire.

There had always been between them a swiftness of mental understanding which held in it a large promise of happiness. In the early days of their friendship, when the charm of their intercourse had consisted, for her, at least, in the more brilliant fascinations of the mind, he had gloried in the free and elemental play of their intellectual sympathies, because he had realized that through this means alone he was able to maintain his place in the life of this lovely and gifted woman.

Later, after she had broken with Beverly, as their

intimacy grew, there had been still so large an element of this magical attraction in their relation that he had wondered, sometimes, if he were ever to get beneath the surface; if he were ever to find the real Carroll Minturn.

Through that talk of long ago with her father, John Treverin had blazed a trail before him, as he had meant to do, and time and chance and circumstance had seemed to carry the rest.

As he watched, however, for the birth of love in her eyes there had come to him a mighty yearning to fathom the mystery of her nature, to understand the woman he loved, as she had never dreamed of being understood.

Through the short months of their brief courtship, with the early freshness of a new-born love surrounding her, he had realized that she was intense and highly strung, but not emotional and, therefore, he had waited anxiously for the dawning of a passion in which he realized that there must be an exquisite blending of sense with soul and the finest essence of spirit and mind. Love, with her, he believed, must have an inspiration that was larger than the personal; otherwise, it could not be vital; and as he looked down now into his wife's radiant eyes, John Treverin was wondering if her heart were entirely satisfied.

They had been married in the brilliant glory of one of October's golden days—not amid the pomp and ceremony of a fashionable Fall wedding at Lenox, as Aunt Anne had planned, but in the quiet beauty of a

Southern noon, with just her father and a few of "the dearest old friends."

Aunt Anne had reasoned, protested and implored in vain; even Uncle Harry had remonstrated, but Carroll had won the day with the characteristic remark that father approved, and she thought she and Jack could *afford* to do exactly as they pleased. Why should *she* have to go through with anything but the simple little service which they both preferred? Even Elizabeth and Rick were detained in Arizona by an unfortunate combination of circumstances.

"To think, you dear darling," wrote Jack's sister, "that I shan't be able to see you married! 'The boy' is down with measles—a light attack—but the doctor says he won't be well enough to travel for weeks, and, I couldn't leave him, you know; I never have.

"As for Rick, since the referendum plan was adopted, anti-joint statehood sentiment, always pronounced here, has broken out in a most virulent form, and Rick's doom is sealed until after the election."

"Jack," Carroll had exclaimed suddenly, after reading this letter, "couldn't we have part, at least, of our *lune de miel* in Arizona?" and she had never forgotten how his face had lighted up as he responded:

"Nothing would please me better, I think. The plan to spend it all on 'The Little Corsican' was made entirely for you, Princess."

"I know," she had replied gently. "I wanted that at first because I learned to love you at sea. But now! Sometimes I think there is—another—*you*—bound up

in Arizona, and," her eyes were very wistful, as she added, "I'm not sure that I have found *him* yet."

"Dear heart!" was all that he had said, but there was a world of tenderness in his eyes.

And so, after a fortnight at sea, they had left the yacht at a Southern port and had come directly on to Arizona, where she had insisted upon finding "the very spot" in the desert which had been "consecrated" to their first meeting; and upon other delightful absurdities connected with his boyhood.

At last they had surprised Elizabeth by dropping in at "Rocklands" on evening just at dinner time; when, as Rick put it, they were supposed to be "harmlessly happy and several hundred leagues at sea."

"We're hardly sure that we've come down to earth yet," returned Carroll merrily. "I asked Jack yesterday, if he imagined that I could be interesting for five minutes to any one else but him."

"And what did he say?" asked Elizabeth mischievously.

"Oh," returned the girl with a charming blush, "his answer wasn't at all satisfactory, or, at least, hardly calculated to appeal to one's reason."

"Then it must have aimed to make an impression upon one's heart," smiled Elizabeth Wood, demurely.

That had been the gayest of reunions at "Rocklands," and Carroll's happiness over it made her husband's heart glow.

Even in his lover's imagination of the girl he had never dreamed of this radiancy of glory that seemed to envelop her in the bloom of her womanhood. It was

as though, having tasted at the springs of earth, she had come at last to wait in all the fine simplicity of her nature at the fountain head of life for him who could draw her portion from the deep, sweet well of love.

"She's adorable, Jack," his sister had told him, with enthusiasm. "She's so altogether charming that one can quite forgive her intellect, which is more than can be said of most of our sex to whom knowledge is dangerous, because it usually makes us so extremely unlovely. Rick admires her immensely; he was awfully afraid from what he had heard that she was going to be the sort of woman who said 'an undisputed thing in such a solemn way,' but instead of that they've become positively 'chummy.' I imagine," with a twinkle, "that the topic upon which they are most thoroughly at one is this dear, big brother of mine," and she squeezed his arm affectionately.

" 'The boy' worships her with all the ardor of his years, and as for Uncle M'nassah, he fairly beams, like a sort of benignant black Providence. I overheard him remarking to Liza only this morning: 'I done raise dat chile; an' fo' Gawd, Marse John do look mighty proud dat he got her; but I 'dopted *him* long ago; de fust time I set eyes on 'im back da in Washin'ton!"

And so, at length, they were on their way home. Home? Was New York, then, to be home, at last? He realized for the first time that the thought had power, no longer, to cause him bitterness.

He had always believed, and he had been wont to say, that a man's *real* home could only be found in the

land of his heart's desire; and, until tonight, had that not meant for him, at least, this country called Arizona?

Was it the superb optimism of love, alone, that had somehow wrought the change, or could it be, rather, that his own views of life had come, gradually, to alter?

He had never cared much for power in the abstract, and yet now, he knew, that he was glad—more glad than he ever believed he could possibly be, that he had what men called, "the best of the earth" to lay at this woman's feet.

He remembered the passion of regret with which he had surrendered his youthful dream—the tremendous temptation that had assailed him, at times, to "throw it all over" and return. During the steady grind of those first years he had felt that there was supreme irony in the Fate that had made him a junior partner in "Freeman and Company," when he would so infinitely have preferred the broader freedom and the eternal romance of a life bound up with the West. There had been days when he had longed with a mighty passionate longing for the wide, hot stretches of the desert; for its palpitant heat; its far horizons, and that pure delusion of atmosphere which creates the mystic mirage. There had been nights when he had yearned, with an intense yearning, for the cooling breath of the hills; for the dim blue outlines of mountain masses that loomed in distant darkness against a moonlit sgy, for the weird pathos of a coyote's cry; for the brilliant canopy of the friendly stars; and

when, at length, out of troubled sleep, he had awakened in the cold grey light of a cheerless dawn—wildly athirst for such life as can be drunk at the fountains of Nature alone; there had been only the clatter of the early milk carts in the avenue below to respond to an inward craving of the soul.

Oh, it had been hard—cruelly hard—but, at last, thank heaven, it was over; and as he looked back from the heights of his present happiness, he felt as he thought a man might feel who stood at the grave of his youth.

He loved this country still. More, he believed, than he had ever been capable of loving it in the blind passion of his boyhood. He felt that he would never cease to love it; but he knew that his love, no longer, had the power to cause him pain. Instead of that bitterness of renunciation which had always assailed him, at the thought of leaving it, there was now a tranquility—strange and new—of something that looked like peace. But how had this come to pass—and why—he wondered—why?

"Jack," said a low, sweet voice at his ear, "I should like to tell you a story."

"Yes, my love," he had responded, gently, "your husband waits to hear."

There had been another long silence between them—a silence of perfect understanding. To his own surprise, she had already won from him much of this story of his past, and while his heart had grown lighter with the telling, the wonder and the mystery had deepened in her eyes.

"It is a sort of fairy tale, Jack, that has grown so very slowly—but tonight, I saw the end, I think—through the welding of the sword." With a little fervent gesture, that was peculiarly her own, she threw out the hand that was free and included all of the sunset.

Surrounded by the splendor of the dying day, enveloped in its rosy flush of glory, she seemed to have been transfigured before him into some lovely prophetess, whose temperamental endowments had prepared her to foretell the future, not through miraculous powers of divination, but out of a large and wonderful conception of the past.

Her beauty seemed strangely etherealized by some vision of the beyond; and a sudden momentary fear clutched at his heart—the fear that he should ever lose her for, with all of her passionate ardor, he knew that she was singularly unworldly.

"Don't, dear," he exclaimed quickly, as he drew her closer, "don't look like that! You were, almost, for that moment, a sort of exquisite feminine Elijah, and," he smiled as he felt the warm fluttering of the soft hand in his own, "I don't intend to have you translated even in a chariot of fire."

In her low laugh there was a ripple of music that was singularly human and very sweet.

"Don't you know by this time," she asked, humorously, "that I see all my visions through a single personality, and, my dear, my dear, in *this* fairy tale, at last, there is a Prince."

"But not a charger??" he challenged, smiling.

"A most wonderful charger as well as a sword!" she flashed back at him, triumphantly.

"But I have a prejudice against chargers," with a lugubrious shake of his head. "No doubt it's because you have always admired them, and I don't happen to have one of my own. I was once," he smiled reminiscently, "furiously jealous of a charger, and I fear that it was just because it belonged to another man."

"Please," she whispered, reproachfully, and, under cover of the deepening shadows, a light hand was laid across his lips; "wait until you've heard the story and then, I am *sure,* you'll *know.*"

"Tell it to me, my darling," he said gently, and with his arm he drew her closer until, like a homing bird, she was nestled softly against his heart.

"In a 'far country,'" she began slowly, "there was born, once upon a time, the Prince, and he wanted, by deeds of daring do, to win for himself a kingdom.

"Now this Prince had a very wise father who had himself, in the fervor of youth, renounced very much for the sake, he had thought, of what was infinitely more. The father of the Prince, it was said, had gone forth from his own land and had arrived in the 'far country,' armed with a single trusty sword—that sword which the gods vouchsafe to the young—called strength and hope and courage. All his life this man had valiantly fought; the odds had been heavy; and when, at length, the kingdom was won, there lay at his feet but the fragments of his sword.

"Now in this 'far country' were giants to be slain; but what could the Prince's father do with a kingdom

to guard, and—a broken sword; so he said to himself, at the very last, 'My boy must be greater, far greater, than I; greater than any princeling here; or I fear me, he cannot slay the giants.'

"And thus it chanced that the Prince went back—back to that kingdom which his father had renounced—and with him he took that broken sword, with which gods were wont to arm brave men, but the sword must needs be welded.

"Now times had changed in the kingdom of the East, where men no longer did battle with the sword; where victories were won and triumphs were achieved with a strange, new, powerful magic. But the Prince, who was loyal and true of heart, felt that duty still called him to weld the sword and to fight with this weapon that seemed very old to the cohorts of the East.

"So he took his leave of the glittering throng and, armed with his sword, went alone, toward the West—back to the 'far country.'"

For a long moment there was silence; and when, at last, the sweet voice went on, it was very gentle and richly low with the tenderness of a caress.

"And when, at length, the Prince arrived in the country of his dreams, he said to himself: 'Here I ween, at last, the sword of my father must still hold sway; that sword which the gods were wont to give, called strength and hope and courage.'

"So he welded the sword and he girded it on; and he sought out a Wise Man of the West, and he asked: 'I pray thee, how may I find the giants that my father

used to fight; my father, who warred so valiantly with naught but his magic sword.'

"But the Wise Man shook his head. 'O Prince,' he answered, 'even here the power of the sword is passing away; the giants fall no more, except at the touch of a potent magic, called money.'

"Then, the Prince, at last read the signs of the times, and he said: 'I, too, will have this power—this strange, new magic—that slays the giants'; but his heart was bitter within him."

A soft hand had crept up to his face and light, cool fingers stroked his cheek.

"So back to the East went this brave young Prince; and he fought, and—he won." There was a low thrill of triumphant pride in her voice. "Till he stood *alone;* towering above the kings of the East, who were proud to own him their over-lord. 'For,' they said, 'our Prince hath that potent charm, which is spoken of sometimes, as 'knowing the game; his hand is sure and his head is cool; but he has the secret—secret of power.'

"And the kings of the West, they also bowed, for he sent them the magic that slays the giants. 'This magic,' said they, 'is precious and rare; e'en the kings of the East say 'tis hard to find; and they care not to spare us over-much; but, selfishly, keep it to wage their own wars.

" 'But this Prince, who was one of us once,' they said, 'as a Daysman stands with his hand on us both; with his heart in the West, while his head rules the East; he stands detached; he stands alone! Set apart,

as an umpire, in singular power; set apart because he hath ruled himself; our Daysman holds much of the world in his grasp—and, at last, he must *needs* have his heart's desire.' "

She waited for a brief second, and he felt the quivering breath of a long, tremulous sigh.

"And then," she went on slowly, "one day he found the Princess.

"She was a very foolish Princess; for she hadn't even discovered what she really wanted most. She knew that she had an abstract fancy for two fiery chargers, called Honor and Fame; and she imagined that the way to happiness would have to be carved out for her with a jeweled and flaming sword; thus it chanced that this silly Princess was so very much occupied in the armory of life, that she almost missed—the Prince; and, while she watched the tournaments and the jousting, her eyes were mostly upon—the chargers.

"One day, however, by some strange accident, she found herself no longer a spectator at the tournament, for the poor little Princess had wandered by chance directly into the lists."

There was a swift contraction of her muscles, and her voice sounded low and tense.

"The Princess was at first bewildered; but she did not realize the danger of the situation sufficiently to be frightened about the consequences until, suddenly, she seemed almost under the feet of a huge, prancing charger that had nearly ridden her down. It was then that the Prince appeared."

There was a long, dramatic pause, during which, he knew, that her breath was coming more easily; that her body had relaxed, as she rested within his encircling arm.

"The Prince, I think, had realized the horror of her fate. He had watched and he had waited, so—the Princess was not lost.

"He was disguised, I imagine," she went on slowly, "at least the Princess never could remember, afterwards, whether he wore shining armor or not; but he seemed so strong and clever that he hardly needed a sword, and as for the charger! How glad she was, that his charger was invisible, at the time, for you will remember that it was one of these fearsome beasts that had almost proved her undoing; and she felt as though she couldn't have borne to be near one, soon again.

"Of one thing, however, she was very, very, sure—and this was, that, at last, she seemed absolutely safe—safer than she had ever felt in all her life before—safer than she had even dreamed that a Princess could come to feel.

"And what do you think the Prince had said as he carried the Princess away?"

"What could it have been, sweetheart?"

"He said," in a voice that trembled as it lingered on the words:

> " 'I am thine husband—not a *smaller* soul,
> Nor Lancelot, nor another.' "

With a swift, masterful movement he had her in his

arms. Heart to heart, cheek to cheek, soul to soul, at last; and in one supreme moment, while their lips clung, he *knew* that she was satisfied.

"Do you remember," she whispered presently, "that I said there was a charger?" and then, without waiting for his answer, she went on in a still, soft voice:

"My knight is in shining armor clad—for no other eyes than mine; my Prince bears a jeweled sword, with which to guard our freedom; my king has a winged steed —a glorious creature of light, with which he is able to bear us, at will, to the land of heart's desire. For love to be vital as sentiment must also be vital as fact —and your love for this country, your love for me, have been greater to you than yourself.

"And *now*, do you know why you are going home without a pang of pain?"

Her head was on his breast, her hands still clasped his neck, and his face was drawn down to hers.

"Heart of my heart—love of my life—the reason," he breathed," is *you.*"

"My dear, my dear, it is greater than I; it is deeper, far deeper than we. Don't you know, oh, can't you see, that it is because you are the Daysman?"

THE END.

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